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ABSTRACT

The 16 papers presented in this collection all deal with journalism and journalists from colonial America through the 19th century. The papers and their authors are: "Fighting for a Continent: Newspaper Coverage of the English and French War for Control of North America, 1754-1760" (David A. Copeland); "A Romance with 'Local' Happenings (Never Mind What You Were Taught): Colonial Americans and Their Newspapers" (Julie Hedgepeth Williams); "When Women Speak: A Comparison of the Voices of Black Women Journalists before and after the Civil War" (Bernell E. Tripp); "Inventing an Indian Icon: How the Press Made Sense of Sitting Bull" (John M. Coward); "From Populist to Patrician: Edward H. Butler's Buffalo 'News' and the Crisis of Labor, 1877-1892" (Michael J. Dillon); "'I Heare It So Variously Reported': News-Letters, Newspapers, and the Ministerial Network in New England, 1670-1730" (Sheila McCall McIntyre); "Christmas Puffery: Christmas Book Advertising in Nineteenth Century Newspapers" (Priscilla Coit Murphy); "Little Big Horn Coverage in the Texas Press: Fiercely Partisan Myth-Making" (James E. Mueller); "The Paper and the Poles: The First Major Crusade of Buffalo's "Evening News'" (Jerry Goldberg); "The Work That Came before Art: Willa Cather's Journalism, 1893-1912" (Carolyn L. Kitch); "From 1850 to 1950: Actions of Early Journalists Often Unethical, Even Illegal" (Fred Fedler); "The Medium in the Mirror: How Journalists in the 1880s and 1890s Viewed 'New Journalism'" (James McCollum); "Women's Moral Reform Periodicals of the Nineteenth Century: A Cultural Feminist Analysis" (Therese L. Lueck); "The Third Most Valuable Newspaper Property in Chicago: A History of the 'Chicago Journal'" (Jon Bekken); "Converting the Popular to Politics: The American Feminist Magazine as Forum for Transformation" (Amy Beth Aronson); and "Cattle Papers and the Cowboy: Myth-Making in the 'Bad Lands Cow Boy'" (Ross F. Collins). (NKA)

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AMERICAN JOURNALISM HISTORIANS ASSOCIATION (ANNUAL CONVENTION)

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Part I: Selected Papers Covering the Colonial Period through the 19th Century

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CS 215 533

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Fighting for a Continent: Newspaper Coverage of the English and French War for Control of North America, 1754-1760

by

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ABSTRACT

Title: "Fighting for a Continent: Newspaper Coverage of the English and French War for Control of North America, 1754-1760"

This research looks at newspaper coverage of the French and Indian War era, focusing upon the dangers that the "Colonies to the Northward," that is, the French colonies to the north of British colonial America, presented to English settlers. In particular, this research presents newspaper coverage of how French troops from Canada created panic in the British colonies with a series of victories over the English and how the English recouped to remove the French from the transappalachian region and take control of Canada. The research seeks to offer an accurate portrayal of part the in-depth newspaper coverage of this war that successfully removed France as a key player in North American settlement. The research also demonstrates how newspapers covered a widespread event of intercolonial importance and served as a catalyst in the evolution of individual, autonomous colonies into a political body with a national conscious.

For this study, five colonial newspapers were read in their entirety from January 1754 through December 1763. The newspapers were the *South-Carolina Gazette*, the *Maryland Gazette*, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the *New-York Mercury*, and the *Boston Gazette*. Newspapers were selected because of their geographic locations and because of their continuity of publication. Approximately 2,600 issues were read.

Newspaper coverage of the French and Indian War was "the great running story" of the colonial era, as media historian Frank Luther Mott claimed. For a decade newspapers closely covered the war in all regions of North America as well as fighting between the English, French, and their allies in Europe and Asia once war between the two powers was declared globally. By studying newspaper coverage of the war against the French from 1754-1760, one can begin to understand how complete a picture of the war newspapers provided.

The newspaper coverage of the French and Indian War provided American citizens news of an event important to them all, a fact alone that makes a study of newspapers and the period important. News of the war provided some of the worst and best of journalistic practices. News of the war was filled with propaganda and created a fear of both the French and Indians that was not entirely justified. At the same time, newspaper printers during the period increasingly tried to confirm their news stories to provide readers with the most accurate information as possible.

The newspaper coverage of French and English fighting exhibited all the traits of war news with letters from the front, first-hand battle descriptions, official releases in the form of terms of surrender, enemy atrocities, letters supporting the troops, pieces praising soldiers fallen in battle, and biting denunciations of the enemy. While the news of the war did not eradicate all other news in colonial newspapers, it made all other information secondary for nearly ten years.

Coverage of the French and Indian War by colonial newspapers found America's press joined together to serve the public with the most accurate, complete, and freshest news available. The study of newspapers and the news they presented in this era is essential to our understanding of the growth of the colonial press.

Fighting for a Continent: Newspaper Coverage of the English and French War For Control of North America, 1754-1760

The news in America's newspapers in the first six months of 1754 was not good. England's long-time enemy and challenger for control of North America—France—had, with the assistance of Native American allies, scored a series of victories over English colonial troops from the backcountry of Virginia through New England. Fear that France would soon make a move to drive all the English out of North America seemed ready to become reality. A distraught Virginia Governor Robert Dinwiddie had warned the colony's assemblymen that the very "Welfare of all the Colonies on this Continent" was in jeopardy from the French and their Native American friends. To make sure the House of Burgesses members truly understood the implications of the threat, the governor painted this bloody portrait of what awaited all the English if the French and their allies were not stopped:

> Think you see the Infant torn from the unavailing Struggles of the distracted Mother, the Daughters ravished before the Eyes of their wretched Parents; and then, with Cruelty and insult, butcherd and scalped. Suppose the horrid Scene compleated, and the whole Family, Man, Wife, and Children (as they were) murdered and scalped . . . and then torn in Pieces, and in Part devoured by wild Beasts, for whom they were left a Prey by their more brutal Enemies.[1]

Dinwiddie concluded by telling those in the Assembly that the "Season for entering upon Action" was at hand.

The words of Governor Dinwiddie and the actions of the French and Indians echoed through the pages of America's newspapers in 1754. The news of the war continued unabated in America's press until the French officially relinquished land claims in North America in 1763, and the vast majority of Native Americans east of the Mississippi River either died fighting, succumbed to peace treaties with the English settlers, or moved westward.

This research looks at newspaper coverage of the French and Indian War era, focusing upon the dangers that the "Colonies to the Northward,"[2] that is, the French colonies to the north of British colonial America, presented to English settlers. In particular, this research presents newspaper coverage of how French troops from Canada created panic in the British colonies with a series of victories over the English and how the English recouped to eventually take control of Canada, which was seen as France's passageway into the American colonies[3] and whose defeat would signal "the Honour and Glory of Great-Britain [and] the Prosperity and Welfare of North America."[4] The research seeks to offer an accurate portrayal of part the in depth newspaper coverage of this war that successfully removed France as a key player in North American settlement. The research at the same time demonstrates how newspapers covered a widespread event of intercolonial importance and served as a catalyst in the evolution of individual, autonomous colonies into a political body with a national conscious.

Media historian Frank Luther Mott called the French and Indian War "the great running story" of the colonial era,[5] yet neither Mott nor other media historians discuss in any detail newspaper coverage of the war except to mention the *Pennsylvania Gazette* woodcut "Join or Die" that appeared 9 May 1754 as a warning of what could happen unless the colonies united to fight the French and Indians.[6] This research is a preliminary step in providing an accurate portrayal of "the great running story" of the era.

For this study, five colonial newspapers were read in their entirety from January 1754 through December 1763. The newspapers were the *South-Carolina Gazette*, the *Maryland Gazette*, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the *New-York Mercury*, and the *Boston Gazette*. Newspapers were selected because of their geographic locations and because of their continuity of publication. Approximately 2,600 issues were read.

Before looking at newspaper coverage of the war between the French and English for what ultimately led to English domination of Canada and North America east of the Mississippi River, a brief overview of the relationship between the English and French in North America should help in understanding British colonial feelings and newspaper response to the war.

English and French Relations in Colonial America

English and French settlers in America collided almost immediately after permanent settlements by both countries had been established in 1607 and 1608 respectively. In 1629, hostilities between the nations erupted with the English occupying Quebec from 1629-1632. For the most part, though, the colonies of the two nations developed independently in the seventeenth century. England populated the Atlantic seaboard from Maine to South Carolina, and France settled Canada and the central part of the continent west of the Appalachian Mountains to the mouth of the Mississippi River. Native American tribes, especially the Iroquois and Cherokees, served as a buffer between the two powers in the region of the English Middle Colonies and Southern Colonies.[7]

Even though the two nations settled North America independently, confrontations between English and French colonists in New England and New York and Southeastern Canada occurred because of the proximity of settlements and the lack of barriers such as the Appalachian Mountains or large Native American nations. British settlers, urged on by Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell, captured Acadia—the region of Eastern Maine, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia—in 1654, but the region was returned to France under the monarchy of the pro-Catholic Charles II in 1667. It would, however, remain an area of contention for another century.[8] As long as England had kings with papist leanings, England and France peacefully coexisted. But, the Glorious Revolution of 1688 placed the Protestant William III on England's throne, and within a year, England and France were again at war. In America the war, named for the English king, was fought mainly in the border region of New England and Canada with sporadic fighting in New York. Native Americans joined the French in their raids of English settlements.[9]

American newspapers echoed the fear and dislike that had long existed between the English and French. The single edition of *Publick Occurrences* in 1690 reported that the Honourable General Winthrop had led an expedition into French territories as part of the colonial effort to send the French back to Canada in King William's War. The story also petitioned Almighty God to help subdue Canada.[10] The first issue of the *Boston News-Letter* in 1704 opened with a long account of France's plans to gain control of England and subsequently all English territory in America by placing the Scottish "Pretender," James III, on England's throne. The news from London warned that "the French Kinch [King] knows there cannot be a more effectual way for himself to arrive at the Universal Monarchy."[11]

The *News-Letter*'s report referred to English and French hostilities that had begun in 1702 and continued until 1713 in Queen Anne's War, but following the Peace of Utrecht, England and France entered a period of European peace that lasted thirty years.[12] When fighting between the two erupted again, the war naturally spilled over into the American colonies, and, as with all other wars in America between England and France, Native Americans were central to the fighting and news reports. Known as King George's War in

America (1744-1748), most of the fighting took place on Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, parts of New France that had been ceded to England by the Peace of Utrecht in 1713.[13] According to newspaper reports, up to £105 awaited anyone who could capture an enemy Indian male in this region and bring him to a British officer.[14]

A main point of contention in this confrontation was the fortress of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island. Built by the French as an outpost in 1713, control of Louisbourg would again become a prime concern of the English during the French and Indian War. King George's War gave Louisbourg back to the French in 1748, provided France a refueling station for ships making transatlantic voyages and a major land and water military post, and represented a continual threat to the British port of Halifax, Nova Scotia.[15]

The animosities between English and French settlers of America caused by King George's War were not settled by the war's peace treaty. France controlled most of the territory of North America, and French claims beyond the Appalachians politically curtailed English westward expansion just as French control of Canada halted northern migration. European treaties, however, were not enough to stop British and French expansion. The French began to build forts in the disputed territory of the Ohio River Valley.[16] The British colonists saw these new forts and French troops being positioned in Canada as trespasses against them. In December 1753, Virginia Governor Dinwiddie sent an expedition westward to build forts to stop French encroachment.[17] By the spring of 1754, British colonists and the French were fighting in the Ohio Valley. Directly involved, especially on the side of the French, were Native Americans from the St. Lawrence River to the Mississippi River delta,[18] and the true danger of the French and Indian organization against the British colonists was quickly brought into focus by the publication of George Washington's Journal.[19] Later, Washington's account of his defeat at Fort Necessity by the French and their allies helped crystalize American resolve to fight the French one more time.

As the colonies from Pennsylvania south focused their attention upon the transappalachian region, colonists from New York into New England mustered troops and supplies to battle the enemy from the North, from Canada. Subduing the French in Canada became a prime concern for the British colonists, because, as the Frenchman the Marquis de la Galissoniere had pointed out in 1750, only Canada with its location and human and natural resources was truly capable of thwarting British expansion in the New World.[20]

Driving the French from Canada, then, became a prime goal of the British American colonies and the Mother Country. How newspapers in all regions of the colonies reported on the war from its inception to the capitulation of Canada in 1760 follows.

Newspaper Coverage

Newspaper printers and their correspondents took seriously the threat that the French posed to the British American colonies in the 1750s. The French and their Indian allies had been successful from 1754-1756 in defeating the British colonists, creating the need for a wake-up call for Americans. A writer, calling himself the "Virginia Centinel," delivered the address. He said:

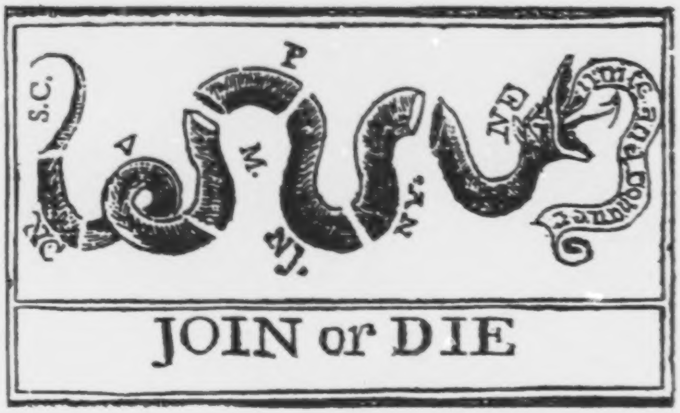
> *Friends! Countrymen!* . . . *AWAKE! ARISE!* . . . When our Country, and all that is included in that important Word, is in most threatening Danger; when our Enemies are busy and unwearied in planning and executing their Schemes of Encroachments and Barbarity . . . when in short our ALL is at Stake . . . the Patriot Passions must be roused in every Breast capable of such generous Sensations. . . . Countrymen! Fellow-Subjects! Fellow-Protestants! to engage your Attention, I need only repeat, YOUR COUNTRY IS IN DANGER.[21]

Newspapers not only covered the war effort, but they also promoted a unity of consciousness for colonists along the Atlantic seaboard. Newspaper reports had warned of French troops moving southward from Canada[22] and of the French master plan to capture the continent in 1753,[23] but it took the newspaper publication of the journal of a twenty-two-year-old major in the Virginia militia, George Washington, in 1754, to bring into focus the real threat that the French and their Native American allies presented to the English colonies.

Published in the *Maryland Gazette* on March 21 and 28, Washington's Journal gave newspaper readers a first-person account of his talks with Native American and French military leaders west of the Appalachians. Readers learned of French forts from New Orleans to Canada, a network of Native American alliances with the French, and how difficult moving supplies into the region would be for British fighting units. Washington's activities became a prime news topic for months,[24] culminating in his defeat at Fort Necessity on July 3.[25]

The news of Washington and the French trouble in the Ohio Valley did not appear in isolation in colonial newspapers. The spring and summer of 1754 brought in reports of French and Indian activity and troop build-up from Maine southward. The *New-York Mercury*, for example, warned readers that the Lake Erie area was already under French control and that the French and Indians planned to attack Albany. Unless stopped by American forces, the article said, citizens could expect France to "subject the whole Continent to the French Yoke."[26]

The widespread attacks by the French from Canada and their Indian allies—brought into focus by Washington's Journal—led to a call for unity of America's colonies.[27] In the May 9 edition of the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, a woodcut of a disjointed rattlesnake, whose parts represented the separate colonies, appeared. It was preceded by the observations that "the present disunited State of the British Colonies, and the extreme Difficulty of bringing so many different Governments and Assemblies to agree in any speedy and effectual Measures for our common Defence and Security" almost surely ensured "the Destruction of the British Interest, Trade and Plantations in America."[28]



"JOIN, or DIE" as it appeared in the *Boston Gazette* on 21 May 1754.

The "JOIN, or DIE" snake, the work of *Gazette* printer Benjamin Franklin,[29] quickly appeared in other newspapers. The *New-York Mercury* produced its own woodcut of the disjointed snake to run with the call for a united British America on May 13. *Boston Gazette* printer Samuel Kneeland recreated the snake and added the words, "Unite and Conquer," coming from the snake's mouth.[30] Other papers described the snake and its calls for unity but did not create a woodcut.[31]

Following the woodcut's call for unity, colonial leaders began putting together a congress to discuss a union of colonies to stop the French and Indians and to create British alliances with Native Americans. Delegates from Maryland and all the colonies above it met in Albany in June. According to *Pennsylvania Gazette*, the meeting with Native Americans at Albany ended "in Favour of the British Interest,"[32] but newspaper reports were also realistic in pointing out that Native Americans were hesitant to meet with English colonists. "A much smaller Number attended the Interview, than heretofore has been usual," reports stated,[33] and most of the Indians were late for the appointed meeting.[34] The fact that the Congress failed to produce a strong Native American alliance only reaffirmed the resolve of the Commissioners in attendance that a union of colonies was necessary. "The Commissioners from the several Governments were unanimously of Opinion, That an Union of the Colonies was absolutely necessary in order to defeat the Schemes of the French," the *Boston Gazette* reported.[35]

During the next few months, colonial governors promoted the Albany Plan of Union, and newspapers carried petitions for its passage. New York Governor James De Lancey, in an address published in the *New-York Mercury*, appealed to the New York General Assembly to support a union of colonies,[36] but the New York legislature—as did the other colonial assemblies—rejected the Albany Plan of Union.[37] Even though colonial governments rejected the Albany Plan of Union, newspaper coverage of calls for union demonstrates that a collective consciousness was developing in British Colonial America. New York and other assemblies did provide money and troops to fight the French and Indians without hesitation.[38] And even though New York, for example, had to constantly worry about French and Indian aggression from Canada, the colony readily sent aid to Virginia to help that colony fight the French and Indians in the Ohio Valley.[39]

The money, supplies, and men raised by colonial governments to fight did little to deter the early success of the French and Indians. The infusion of British regulars and commanders did not help, either. Great Britain sent General Edward Braddock and two regiments to fight in the Ohio Valley. Braddock and his men arrived at Fort Cumberland on the Potomac River in Western Maryland on 11 June 1755, the *Maryland Gazette* reported, and were joined by colonial militiamen and more than one hundred Native Americans who had aligned themselves with the English.[40] Letters from colonial militia members that appeared in newspapers kept readers apprised of Braddock's progress toward the French Fort Duquesne at the meeting of the Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio rivers.[41] But Braddock's troops were routed by the French and Indians, and Braddock killed. Newspapers discussed "the melancholy Accounts of the Defeat of the Forces under the immediate Command of General Braddock" and the repercussions of that loss on the colonies for months.[42]

Braddock's defeat was just one in a string of news stories that painted the picture that the English colonies were in grave danger of being conquered by the French and their Indian allies. Colonists in Western Pennsylvania were constantly being attacked by Native Americans, newspapers reported. A letter in the *South-Carolina Gazette* blamed the raids on "Those Indians [who] renounced their Friendship to the English, soon after the Defeat of General Braddock and (having been persuaded by the French, that the English had laid a deep Scheme for destroying all the French in America, and after them all the Indians) swore perpetual War against them."[43] Farther north, the cruelty of Native Americans under French guidance was portrayed in papers as what awaited all English "put under a *French* Government." One prisoner of the French and Indians in New York, a report said, had his legs broiled by French and Indian soldiers, had gunpowder poured into a furrow cut in his back and lit, and was then scalped and hot coals put on his skull. Finally, the prisoner was chased by soldiers and his head crushed with rocks.[44]

As barbarities such as this were occurring, French troops from Canada and their Indian allies were eradicating English forts along the Canadian border. About 1,500 militiamen at Oswego, on Lake Ontario, surrendered the fort to 6,000 French and Indians, giving up what was considered "one of the most important [British] Garrisons upon this Continent." Oswego had given colonials control of the Great Lakes and temporarily stopped the French from sending troops into the Ohio Valley from Canada.[45] Fort William Henry, the colonial buffer between Albany and the French at Ticonderoga, fell, too, leaving a writer to the *Boston Gazette* to declare, "Our friends and brethren, exterpated, butchered, scalped; our fields, lain waste; our territories, possessed by those that hate us."[46]

Even though newspapers presented reports of continued French and Indian successes, all of the war news in colonial papers was not negative. In July 1756, newspapers reported that England had declared war on France in May, making the conflict that began in North America in 1754 a global war.[47] Colonists also read about plans to rout the French from Canada, a plan that called for seiges of Quebec and Montreal.[48] Before forces from England and the American colonies could mount assaults on Canada's main cities, however, English troops and fleets had to capture Louisbourg, the French fortress at the mouth of the St. Lawrence River.

Louisbourg had been the source of controversy between the English and French for almost fifty years. During King George's War, Louisbourg played a central role, and militiamen, mostly from Massachusetts, captured the fortress in June 1745.[49] The Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, which ended the war, gave Louisbourg back to the French. This peace concession worried the British colonists of Nova Scotia, an English colony since it was seized from France in 1710, and New England. A writer to the *Boston Gazette* in 1756 warned that Nova Scotia would once again have to be rescued from the "Jaws of Destruction" of the French at Louisbourg.[50] The battle for Louisbourg and the island of Cape Breton became important news in American newspapers because the capture of the island and its fortress would signal the successful completion of the first phase of the occupation of Canada.

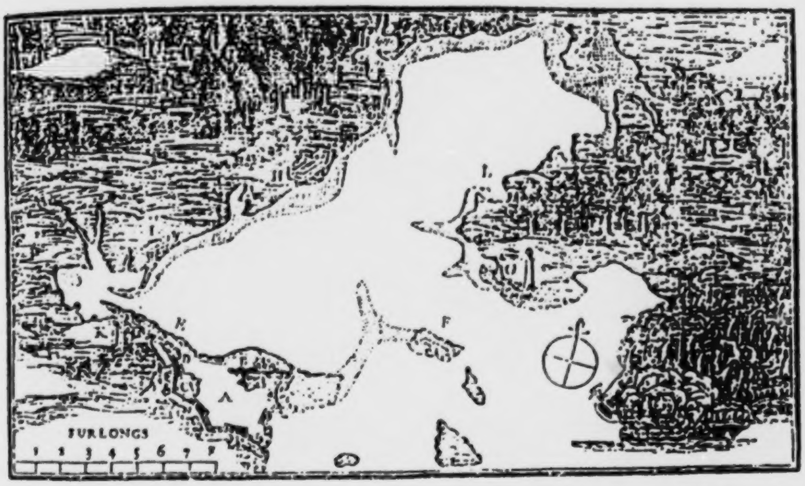
The *Boston Gazette* announced the plan to capture Louisbourg and then all of Canada on 29 March 1758:

> The good Time is at Length arrived, when we may retrieve the Mistakes we have committed in the Conduct of the present War. We have endeavoured at an immense Charge, only to lop the Branches, without laying Ax to the Root of the Tree. A united and vigorous Attempt upon *Canada* has been long desir'd and expected, as the best Method to decide the Contest between us and our persidious Enemies. . . . *Canada* must be destroyed.

Newspaper reports revealed the strategy for the taking of Louisbourg. First, British ships, including two hundred sail from Halifax, set up patrols from Boston throughout the North Atlantic to capture French ships or to keep them from reaching Louisbourg.[51] While the ships patrolled the waters, transports carrying approximately eight thousand land troops headed for Halifax to strengthen the colonial militia and British regulars stationed there.[52] The siege of Louisbourg began on May 22, newspapers reported, when 14,500 British regulars and colonial militiamen left Halifax.[53] Following the departure of the troops, letters from citizens in Halifax and from soldiers provided the bulk of the information that newspapers printed about the actual siege.

Transports ferried the troops the two hundred miles from Halifax to Louisbourg where they stormed the beaches with fixed bayonets.[54] On June 10, British troops had reached "the very Gates of Louisbourg" and "burnt all the Merchant Ships in the Harbour of Louisbourg," newspaper reports said.[55] By June 24, a letter from an officer explained, Louisbourg was completely shut off from all outside communication and being continually bombarded by cannon and mortars.[56] Because news from Louisbourg was so extensive and detailed, the *New-York Mercury* provided its readers with a woodcut of "the City and Harbour of Louisbourg," which explained the city's location, the location of English gun batteries, and the proximity of Cape Breton Island to Acadia or Nova Scotia.

We hope the following Draught of the City and Harbour of *Louiſbourg*, will be acceptable to our Readers, as it may ſerve to give them an Idea of the Situation and Strength of the Place, and render the News from thence more intelligible.



E X P L A N A T I O N.

(A) The Center of the Town.

(B) The North-Eaſt Battery of 10 Guns, 18 Pounders, on two Faces.

(C) The Citadel, fortified diſtinctly from the Town.

(D) The Circular Battery of 16 Guns, 24 Pounders.

(E) The Spur Battery, of 4 Guns.

(F) The Iſland Battery, at the Harbour's Mouth, which mounted 30 Guns, but now beat to Rubbiſh by our Battery, on the Light-Houſe Point.

(G) The Light Houſe Battery.

(H) The Grand Battery which formerly mounted 36 Guns, 42 Pounders, but now diſmantled by the French, and the Cannon placed upon the Works in the Town.

(I) An Engliſh Battery.

(K) The advanced Battery on Green-Hill.

(L) The Careening-Place.

CAPE-BRETON Iſland, on which Louiſbourg is built, lies on the South of the Gulph of the River St. Lawrance, ſeparated from Acadia, by the narrow Streit of Canſo, and is about 100 Miles in Length, and 50 in Breadth; it is full of fine Bays and Harbours, and an excellent Fiſhery on its Coaſt.

The *New-York Mercury*'s 14 August 1758 woodcut explaining the siege of Louisbourg.

Under embargo since April and surrounded by English troops for nearly two months, the French in Louisbourg surrendered their garrison July 26. An unsubstantiated report of the

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surrender was printed by the *New-York Mercury* on August 21, as reported by a New York resident who received the information from a friend in Boston. By the next week confirmed news of the surrender reached New York via letters written to citizens of Halifax. Hugh Gaine, printer of the *Mercury*, proclaimed before the letters, "It gives the Printer of this Paper the greatest Pleasure, that he now can with Certainty assure his Readers of the Reduction of the Island of Cape-Breton, and the Fortress of Louisbourg."[57] Two different letters confirming the surrender followed, along with the Articles of Capitulation and casualty listings for the British and American troops. And correspondents to newspapers immediately recognized the significance of the fall of Louisbourg. "By this Event," a piece in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* proclaimed, "France is deprived of the Key to her North American Trade, and of the Means to insult and encroach upon our Settlements."[58]

The victory by the English at Louisbourg also produced a new hero for the American press, a thirty-year-old general named James Wolfe. Wolfe led the troops that stormed the gates of Louisbourg and also positioned the mortar and cannon that bombarded the fortress. But Wolfe's heroics were not the only ones reported in the papers, and the victory at Louisbourg was the first in a string of successes for the English. In September, for example, news reached Annapolis that Fort Frontenac, a major French outpost on the St. Lawrence at Lake Ontario, had fallen to General John Bradstreet.[59] The French in Canada were now cut off from Europe and from French troops in the Ohio Valley. The fall of Fort Duquesne under General John Forbes followed,[60] and a letter from the Canadian front noted that the French "were in the greatest Confusion at Montreal."[61] Within seven months, the last remaining French forts between the British colonies and Canada—Niagara, Ticonderoga, and

Crown Point—were all under English control.[62]

With Louisbourg fallen and with the English in control of the major French forts on the Canadian border, newspapers began to suggest that the end of the fighting might be in sight. Pennsylvania Governor William Denny announced to all Pennsylvanians that "a Day of Publick Thanksgiving" would be observed because God had heard "the Prayers which were made by his Servants, at the manifold Troubles and Calamities attending the Continuance of a most dangerous War, and to bless the Arms of His Majesty in the Course of this Year" because of "many signal Victories, both by Sea and Land, for which every British and Protestant should be sincerely thankful."[63] And a letter writer suggested, "There is no room to doubt of France's being reduced to great distress, and involved in almost insuperable difficulties, and that she ardently wishes for peace."[64]

With the French in Canada reeling from major losses, the English, according to newspapers, began organizing a two-pronged attack on Canada's main cities, Quebec and Montreal, spearheaded by General Wolfe from the east and General Jeffrey Amherst, who had directed the Louisbourg siege, from the south. With the war now favoring the British, colonial recruits increased. Voluntary enlistment provided 2,500 militiamen from New York,[65] while 5,000 Massachusetts men enlisted for the push into Canada.[66] In addition, reports from ships arriving in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, said that 12,000 British troops in Barbados were now preparing to join the siege of Canada.[67] News reports also suggested that many Native American tribes that had fought with the French in the Ohio Valley, New York, and New England were also abandoning their former allies. "Between 500 and 600 Indians have joined with England and declared against the French," a letter writer from Albany informed *Pennsylvania Gazette* readers,[68] while other Native American nations met with the English to form alliances at Fort Pitt, on the site of the razed French Fort Duquesne.[69] Other newspaper reports suggested that at least 1,100 Native Americans were hurrying to join the English forces preparing to attack Canada from the south.[70]

With sufficient supplies and military forces, the British launched their "Expedition against CANADA,"[71] in the summer of 1759. Because the English controlled the territory between their advancing armies and the main colonial ports, news of the invasion of Canada appeared weekly, despite the fact that a writer to the *Boston Gazette* claimed, "it will be very difficult for a weekly news writer to keep pace" with the advancing army.[72] The attack on Canada began with Quebec, approximately two hundred miles up the St. Lawrence River from Montreal, and newspaper reports provided varied information about the attack, Canada, and Quebec itself in days leading up to the surrender of Canada's oldest French settlement. Newspaper readers learned in August that Wolfe had landed 10,000 men on the Island of Orleans just in front of Quebec, erected batteries of artillery, and was "burning the Country for 50 Miles round it [Quebec]."[73] An officer with General Wolfe described Canada as "a Garden, from one End to the other," and then remarked that "all France can't save them [Canadians] from Ruin and Destruction; for we shall burn their Houses, destroy their Corn, and eat their Cattle."[74]

By the middle of September American newspaper readers knew that a major assault on Quebec was probable if the "Manifesto" issued by General Wolfe to the citizens of Quebec was rejected. The general queried:

> Are the Canadians ignorant of their Present Situation? A respectable Fleet, and a powerful Army, cuts off all the Hopes of Succour, which they otherwise

> might have expected from Europe: And another Army threatens them on the other side the Continent --- In so critical a Situation, can they hesitate? What can they expect by Opposition? . . . Let then the Canadians determine.———On one side behold England (whose Sincerity is well known) offering them their Effects, and indulging them in every Privilege: On the other side, behold France, inert, and incapable, abandoning them in the most critical Conjuncture.[75]

The Canadian residents of Quebec and the French soldiers with them did reject Wolfe's offer, and Wolfe began an offensive, to draw attention away from General Amherst's army to the south of Quebec.[76] Within a week of news of the assault on Quebec, Americans learned that "the Reduction of QUEBEC, the Capital of CANADA" was complete, as English troops defeated an army "more than three times our Number." The rejoicing that should have accompanied the victory was short-lived for Americans, though, because in the same paragraphs that announced the fall of Quebec, newspaper readers learned "that General WOLFE is among the Number of the Killed----His Zeal for His Majesty's Honour was unrivall'd---his Bravery and Activity, as an Officer, had made him the Darling of the Soldiery.-----He lived to see the Enemy fly before him, and then expired in a full Blaze of Glory."[77] Readers also heard that Wolfe "died gloriously . . . rather to be envied than pitied."[78]

For the remainder of 1759 and early into 1760, Americans, through numerous newspaper recounts of the capture of Quebec, relived the significant capture of Canada's capital and the death of a man considered a hero.[79] Even though it was not true, poems of praise considered the fall of Quebec analogous with the defeat of Canada and the French. "Louisbourg reduc'd and Quebeck subdu'd, Our Rights and Liberties at length secur'd," one poet rejoiced.[80] While another writer declared:

When first thy noble Conquest reach'd our Ears,
Compleat were all our Hopes, dispell'd our Fears;
Quebec is taken, was the joyful Note,
Quebec is taken, thrills thro' every Throat.[81]

While another poet declared: "Britons, the work of war is done! Conquest is yours, the battle's won."[82] Yet in the rejoicing, elegies for General Wolfe tempered Quebec's reduction. A writer lamented, "Ev'n Canada was thus too dearly bought; That savage, treacherous Race, which to subdue Requir'd no less a Conqueror than You."[83]

After wintering at Quebec and surviving a siege by French forces of the city, the English war effort prepared to take Montreal.[84] News of French deserters, captured French supply ships, and increasing numbers of Native American allied to the English printed in colonial newspapers no doubt helped bolster colonial assurances that the war would soon end,[85] as did reports that 14,000 English troops were assembled outside Montreal.[86] Newspapers, as they had done for the siege and capture of Quebec, printed as much news weekly as they could about the assault on Montreal.[87] The 8 September 1760 surrender was first printed in newspapers on September 22. The *Boston Gazette* declared, "We have the most joyful News of the surrender of the City of MONTREAL . . . and therewith the Surrender of CANADA."[88] Three days later, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* put the capitulation of Montreal into a British perspective:

> We now have the Pleasure to congratulate our Countrymen upon the most important Event, as we apprehend, that has ever happened in Favour of the British Nation . . . the War in Canada is at an End: The Governor, has surrendered the Country to the British General Amherst without Bloodshed. The Subjects of France are to be sent Home, all that remain of the French are to swear Allegiance to His Majesty, and retain their Possessions.[89]

The papers concluded 1760 and started 1761 with journals and letters about the taking of

Montreal, a history of the war with France since 1748, and the peace terms agreed to between General Amherst and the Marquis de Vaudreuil, governor of Canada.[90] One writer even painted a picture of bliss in Canada because of British rule: "Those Inhabitants who but lately were under the Tyrannical Yoke of France, now exult in the Liberty they enjoy under the British Government."[91]

Although peace terms were signed, the fighting between the French and English would continue sporadically in North America. But most of it, according to newspapers, would be in the Caribbean or in conjunction with Native American attacks in the Southern colonies. Newspapers did report one last French attempt to retake Canada by attacking Newfoundland in the summer of 1762. After briefly gaining control of the island, however, the French agreed to a final truce with General Amherst on September 18, following an attack by the general's troops on French forces in St. Johns.[92] Newspapers noted the end of hostilities between England and France worldwide early in 1763, with the definitive 10 February 1763 Peace of Paris appearing in newspapers in May.[93]

Conclusion

Newspaper coverage of the French and Indian War was "the great running story" of the colonial era, as Frank Luther Mott claimed. For a decade newspapers closely covered the war in all regions of North America as well as fighting between the English, French, and their allies in Europe and Asia once war between the two powers was declared globally. This research has only discussed newspaper coverage of English and French hostilities from the Ohio Valley into Canada and the capture of Canada. Hundreds of news items that discussed this aspect of the war have been left out. The removal of the French from Canada was no doubt the most important aspect of the war to all citizens of British Colonial America, but news of the Indians wars in the Southern colonies, the war at sea, the war in the Caribbean, the war in Europe, and the war in the East Indies and India, was also important. The hundreds of stories on these aspects of the war have been omitted from this study, too. The fact that American newspapers covered all facets of the war is testament to the war's significance to the American population. However, by studying only newspaper coverage of the war against the French from 1754-1760, one can begin to understand how complete a picture of the war newspapers provided. Unfortunately, most history texts overlook newspapers as valid sources of historical fact.[94]

Although not the first news story of intercolonial importance,[95] the French and Indian War no doubt held the most implications for colonial America prior to the conflict between the colonies and England that led to the Revolution. The united presentation of news and the sharing of it by colonial printers during the French and Indian War provided a ready source for common resistance during the Stamp Act crisis, which began the year after the French and Indian War ended and was part of England's plan to recoup losses incurred in defending America. Because newspapers had reported on a common enemy for the decade before the Stamp Act, uniting to fight a common enemy to newspapers such as the Stamp Act had to be a logical step for printers.[96]

Newspaper growth during the French and Indian War period is also an indicator of the importance of news of the war to the American colonists. From 1754 to 1760, the number of newspapers in America increased 73 percent, from eleven English language newspapers to nineteen. At the same time, the population of the British American colonies increased by just 36 percent, from slightly more than 1.17 million inhabitants to slightly more than 1.59 million.[97] Newspapers grew at twice the rate of the American population in the period leading up to the capitulation of Canada, no doubt because of the desire for news about the war, a fact confirmed by Isaiah Thomas, first American media historian and a printer's apprentice during the war. Thomas said, "The war with the French at this time [1755], in which the British colonies were deeply interested, increased the demand for public journals."[98] In addition, another three newspapers were begun in the colonies before the official end of the French and Indian War in 1763.

The newspaper coverage of the French and Indian War did more than provide American citizens news of an event important to them all, a fact that alone makes study of newspapers and the period important. News of the war provided some of the worst and best of journalistic practices. News of the war was filled with propaganda. From Governor Dinwiddie's description of the rape and butchering of innocent English families to the torture of prisoners by the French and Indians, newspaper accounts of the war created a fear of both the French and Indians that was not entirely justified. Readers were also given a portrait of the English as freedom fighters who, as reports from Canada in 1760 noted, freed French Canadians from "the Tyrannical yoke of France." At the same time, newspaper printers during the period increasingly tried to confirm their news stories to provide readers with the most accurate information as possible. This is exactly what *New-York Mercury* printer Hugh Gaine did in 1758 with news about the surrender of Louisbourg. Gaine told his readers that he could now "with Certainty" report the fall of the fortress on Cape Breton.

The newspaper coverage of French and English fighting from the Ohio Valley through

New England and the "Campaign to the Northward" to capture Canada during the French and Indian War tells the story of a fight for a continent. It exhibited all the traits of war news with letters from the front, first-hand battle descriptions, official releases in the form of terms of surrender, enemy atrocities, letters supporting the troops, pieces praising soldiers fallen in battle, and biting denunciations of the enemy. While the news of the war did not eradicate all other news in colonial newspapers, it made all other information secondary for nearly ten years.

The French and Indian War *was* the most significant story of the colonial era prior to the revolutionary period. It helped mold independent colonies into political bodies dependent on each other for survival. Benjamin Franklin was correct in 1754 with his "JOIN, or DIE" snake. The British American colonies had to join together to repel and conquer the French and their Native American allies. The same would be true for the colonies twenty years later with the British. But Franklin's snake was also a metaphor for colonial newspapers. By joining together to present comprehensive details of a war, newspapers began creating a competent network for information exchange and dissemination in America that citizens increasingly found they could not do without. The desire for information, consequently, produced a 73 percent increase in America's press during the war period.

Coverage of the French and Indian War by colonial newspapers found America's press joined together to serve the public with the most accurate, complete, and freshest news available. The study of newspapers and the news they presented in this era is essential to our understanding of the growth of the colonial press. How newspapers covered the North American war with the French and their defeat in Canada is but the first step.

ENDNOTES

1. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 7 March 1754, 3; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 12 March 1754, 1-2; *New-York Mercury*, 25 March 1754, 1; *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Advertiser*, 26 March 1754, 1; *and South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 2 April 1754, 2.

2. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 2 May 1754, 2; and *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Advertiser* (14 May 1754), 3.

3. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 23 May 1754, 1.

4. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 22 June 1758, 1.

5. Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism, A History: 1690-1960*, 3rd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1962), 52.

6. See, for example, James Melvin Lee, *History of American Journalism* (Garden City, N.Y.: Garden City Publishing, 1923), 84; Willard Grosvenor Bleyer, *Main Currents in the History of American Journalism* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927), 76; Jean Folkerts and Dwight L. Teeter, *Voices of a Nations: A History of Media in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1989), 50; Edwin Emery and Michael Emery, *The Press and America: An Interpretive History of the Mass Media*, 6th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1988), 57; Wm. David Sloan, James G. Stovall and James D. Startt, eds. *The Media in America: A History*, 2nd ed. (Scottsdale, Ariz.: Publishing Horizons, 1993), 42. Other important texts on media history only give brief mention of the French and Indian War, offer no discussion of newspaper coverage, or do not mention it. See, for example, Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America* (1810, reprint; New York: Weathervane Books, 1970), 305, 368; Frederic Hudson, *Journalism in the United States, From 1690-1872* (1873; reprint, New York: J. & J. Harper, 1969); George Henry Payne, *History of Journalism in the United States* (1920, reprint; Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1970), 70-71; Mott, 52; Sidney Kobre, *The Development of the Colonial Newspaper* (1944, reprint; Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1960), 108; Sidney Kobre, *Development of American Journalism* (Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown, 1969); Mitchell Stephens, *A History of News: From the Drum to the Satellite* (New York: Viking Press, 1988), 186; and Wm. David Sloan and Julie Hedgepeth Williams, *The Early American Press, 1690-1783* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), 123.

David S. Shields, *Oracles of Empire: Poetry, Politics, and Commerce in British America, 1690-1750* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 222-26, discusses the role of the French and Indian War in producing elements of an empire identity among American colonists. He does not, however, use any examples of calls for a common American identity from American newspapers.

7. George Brown Tindall, *America: A Narrative History*, vol. 1 (New York and London: W.W. Norton, 1984), 150-53.

8. Russell Bourne, *The Red King's Rebellion: Racial Politics in New England 1675-1678* (New York: Atheneum, 1990), 215.

9. Tindall, 152-53.

10. *Publick Occurrences Both Forreign and Domestick* (Boston), 25 September 1690, 2. King William's War lasted from 1689-1697 and was the first of four wars in the New World between England and France that corresponded roughly to wars fought in Europe between the two nations. For a description of the first three wars between the English and French in North America, see Howard H. Peckham, *The Colonial Wars, 1689-1762* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

11. *Boston News-Letter*, 24 April 1704, 1.

12. W. E. Lunt, *History of England*, 4th ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 475.

13. Lunt, 475.

14. *Boston Evening-Post*, 26 August 1745, 2.

15. "Fortress of Louisbourg," http://www.chatsubo.com/louisbourg/overview.html (28 Feb. 1996).

16. Larry Roux, "A Brief History of the French and Indian War," *1755*, http://web.syr.edu/~laroux/history.html (19 Jan. 1996).

17. *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Advertiser*, 19 March 1754, 1.

18. Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore and London: The John Hopkins University Press, 1992), 25.

19. Washington's Journal was published in the *Maryland Gazette*, 21 and 28 March 1754. Other newspapers picked up Washington's experiences in the Ohio Valley, including the *Boston Gazette*, one of the newspapers included in this study. The *Gazette* ran Washington's Journal over a six-week period, from 16 April through 21 May 1754.

20. Marquis de la Galissoniere, "Memoir on the French Colonies in North America, December 1750," *American Revolution*, http://grid.let.rug.nl/~welling/usa/documents/galissonierre.html (20 Jan. 1996).

21. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 12 August 1756, 1 (emphasis included). The work of the "Virginia Centinel" first appeared in the *Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg), 30 April 1756. That issue is no longer extant. The Centinel's letter appeared in newspapers in most American cities. For a brief discussion of the "Virginia Centinel," see J. A. Leo Lemay, *A Calendar of American Poetry* (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1972), 183-84.

22. See, for example, *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 5 July 1753, 2; 26 July 1753, 1.

23. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 13 December 1753, 1.

24. Other newspapers reprinted Washington's "Journal to the River Ohio." See, for example, *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Advertiser* (16 April-21 May 1754). William Hunter, printer of the *Virginia Gazette* in Williamsburg, published Washington's Journal as a pamphlet in 1754. News of Washington's activities in the West became a regular feature in newspapers. For examples, see *Boston Gazette*, 26 March 1754, 1; 2 July 1754, 2; 11 July 1754, 1; *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 14 February 1754, 3; 8 April 1754, 3; *New-York Mercury*, 8 April 1754, 3; 13 May 1754, 2; 24 June 1754, 2; 8 July 1754, 2; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 5 February 1754, 2; 12 March 1754, 1; *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 5 March 1754, 2; 19 April 1754, 1; 11 June 1754, 1.

25. *New-York Mercury, 22 July 1754, supplement; Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 25 July 1754, 3; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia, 25 July 1754, 1; *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Advertiser*, 30 July 1754, 2; and *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 1 August 1754, 2. The original report of Washington's defeat was taken from the 19 July 1754 issue of the *Virginia Gazette*.

26. 26 August 1754, 1.

27. Sinclair Hamilton, "The Earliest Device of the Colonies and Some Other Early Devices," *Princeton University Library Chronicle* 10 (1948-49): 118, notes that the "JOIN, or DIE" woodcut was "the first device to appear in this country symbolizing or suggesting the union of the colonies."

28. 9 May 1754, 2.

29. Franklin's authorship of the rattlesnake woodcut is generally accepted. For a discussion of his usage of the rattlesnake as a symbol of unity during the French and Indian War and earlier, see J. A. Leo Lemay, *The Canon of Benjamin Franklin, 1722-1776* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1986), 124-26.

30. *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Advertiser*, 21 May 1754, 3.

31. *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 22 August 1754, 2.

32. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 18 July 1754, 2.

33. *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Advertiser*, 23 July 1754, 2; and *New-York Mercury*, 29 July 1754, 2.

34. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 11 July 1754, 2.

35. 23 July 1754, 2. For the text of the Albany Plan of Union, see Henry Steele Commanger, ed., *Documents of American History*, 8th ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968), I:43-45.

36. 26 August 1754, 1.

37. *New-York Mercury*, 2 September 1754, 1.

38. See, for example, *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Advertiser*, 10 September 1754, 2; *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 19 September 1754, 2; *New-York Mercury*, 16 September 1754, 2; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 17 October 1754, 2; and *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 10 October 1754, 2.

39. *New-York Mercury*, 2 September 1754, 1; and *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 5 September 1754, 1.

40. 12 June 1755, 2.

41. See, for the example, the letters that appeared in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 10 July-7 August 1754.

42. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 31 July 1755, 2. See, also, *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 7 August 1755, 2; and *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 21 August 1755, 2. For continued discussion of the ramifications of Braddock's defeat, see *Boston Gazette, or Country Journal*, 18 August 1755, 1; and *New-York Mercury*, 10 November 1755, 2-3.

43. 7 May 1756, extraordinary.

44. *New-York Mercury*, 30 August 1756, 1.

45. *New-York Mercury*, 6 September 1756, 3.

46. *Boston Gazette, or Country Journal*, 22 August 1757, 3. News of the surrender of Fort William Henry appeared in the *Gazette* on August 15.

47. *New-York Gazette*, 19 July 1756, 3; *Maryland Gazette*, (Annapolis), 22 July 1756, nameplate; *Boston Gazette, or Country Journal*, 26 July 1756, 1; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 29 July 1756, 1; and *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 19 August 1756, 1. The global war between England, France, and their allies was known as the Seven Years' War. Fighting continued in North America as well as in Europe, India, and the East Indies. Fighting between the French and English also took place in the West Indies. According the newspaper reports, fighting in the Caribbean escalated from privateer raids that began in 1754 to skirmishes in 1755, and outright fighting early 1756. See, for example, *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 9 April 1754, 1; 1 May 1755, 2; and 15 April 1756, 2.

48. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 5 February 1756, 1.

49. For reports on the siege and surrender of Louisbourg during King George's War, see *Boston Gazette, or Weekly Journal*, 28 May-20 August 1745.

50. *Boston Gazette, and Country Journal*, 28 June 1756, 1.

51. *New-York Mercury*, 17 April 1758, 2; and 1 May 1758, 2. The additional ships from Boston were reported 26 June 1758, 2.

52. *New-York Mercury*, 3 April 1758, 2.

53. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 22 June 1758, 1.

54. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 29 June 1758, 2.

55. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 13 July 1758, 3.

56. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 3 August 1758, 2.

57. *New-York Mercury*, 28 August 1758, 2. News of the reduction of Louisbourg appeared in the *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 28 August 1758, 1; the *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 17 August 1758, 3; the *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 24 August 1758, 3; and the *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 2 October 1758, 1. In anticipation of the fall of Louisbourg, the *South-Carolina Gazette* described the surrender of Louisbourg in 1745 in its 4 August 1758 edition, while newspapers in Annapolis, Boston, New York, and Philadelphia continued with reports of prisoners, military supplies, and the siege itself in September and October.

58. 30 November 1758, 1.

59. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 28 September 1758, 2.

60. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 7 December 1758, 3; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 14 December 1758, 1; *New-York Mercury*, 18 December 1758, 3; *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 8 January 1759, 1; and *South-Carolina Gazette* (Annapolis), 29 December 1758, 2.

61. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 7 December 1758, 3.

62. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 16 August 1759, 1; and *New-York Mercury*, 27 August 1759, 2.

63. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 14 December 1758, 3.

64. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 26 April 1759, 1.

65. *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 30 April 1759, 1.

66. *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 14 May 1759, 2.

67. *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 28 May 1759, 2.

68. 3 May 1759, 1.

69. *New-York Mercury*, 9 July 1759, 2; *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 12 July 1759, 3; and *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 16 July 1759, 2.

70. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 26 July 1759, 2. It should be noted that although many Native Americans from the Ohio Valley northward were switching loyalties, not all Native Americans who had originally sided with the French abandoned them. Indian attacks continued in the colonies, and in the Southern Colonies, 1759 brought the advent of a major war between Native Americans and English settlers. The *South-Carolina Gazette*, from the summer of 1759 through 1760 chronicles this Indian war. The French were involved with the Indians in this war that stretched from Western Georgia into Southwest Virginia, but the French were not principal players in the fighting as they were in the Ohio Valley, New York, and New England.

71. *New-York Mercury*, 13 August 1759, 3.

72. 6 August 1759, 1.

73. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 23 August 1759, 2; *New-York Mercury*, 27 August 1759, 3; and *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 30 August 1759, 2.

74. *Boston Gazette, and Country Journal*, 10 September 1759, 1. The letter was one of four that the *Gazette* published under the headline "News from Quebeck." Headlines were rare in colonial newspapers.

75. *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 17 September 1759, 1; *New-York Mercury*, 17 September 1759, 3; *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 27 September 1759, 3; and *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 27 September 1759, 1.

76. *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 8 October 1759, 1; and *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 11 October 1759, 3.

77. *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 15 October 1759, 1; and *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 25 October 1759, 2.

78. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 18 October 1759, 3; and *New-York Mercury*, 15 October 1759, 3. A different account of the capture of Quebec and Wolfe's death appeared in the *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 27 October 1759, 1. Taken from the *Newport Mercury*, the story appeared under the headline, "God be praised! Quebec is in English Hands."

79. Almost every weekly edition of the papers studied, except for the *South-Carolina Gazette*, carried stories about the victory at Quebec. The 31 December 1759 issue of the *New-York Mercury*, as a prime example, offered "A Journal of the Expedition up the River St. Lawrence," which recounted each day on the journey with General Wolfe from the departure from Louisbourg through the surrender of Quebec.

80. *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 3 January 1760, 1.

81. *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 22 October 1759, 1; and *New-York Mercury*, 29 October 1759, 3.

82. *Boston Gazette, and Country Journal*, 3 March 1760, 1.

83. *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 22 October 1759, 1; and *New-York Mercury*, 29 October 1759, 3. Other poems to Wolfe appeared in newspapers. See, for example, *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 25 October 1759, 2; and *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 1 November 1759, 2.

84. See, for example, *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 14 February 1760, 2; and 17 April 1760, 2. For an account of the French siege of Quebec, see, for example, *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 28 August 1760, 1-2.

85. See, for example, *Maryland Gazette* (Annapolis), 10 July 1760, 3; and *New-York Mercury*, 16 June 1760, 3 and 30 June 1760, 2.

86. *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 15 September 1760, 1.

87. Newspapers in this study, with the exception of the *South-Carolina Gazette*, published approximately two pages of news on Montreal and fighting in Canada from the middle of July through September. The *South-Carolina Gazette* did keep its readers informed about the fighting in Canada, but the province was involved in a major war with the Cherokees during 1760. Most of its news centered on that conflict.

88. 22 September 1760, 3 (emphasis included). The *New-York Mercury*, 22 September 1760, 2, announced the surrender with a different account.

89. 25 September 1760, 1. The *Maryland Gazette* printed the news of the surrender on 2 October 1760, and the *South-Carolina Gazette* carried it on 4 October 1760.

90. For the Articles of Capitulations, see *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 8 December 1760, 2-3; *New-York Mercury*, 15 December 1760, 2-3; *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 25 December 1760, 1-2; and *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 10 January 1761, 1. For an example of a newspaper story on the history of war with France since 1748, see *New-York Mercury*, 5 January 1761, 1-2.

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91. *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 5 March 1761, 3.

92. The fighting in Newfoundland is mentioned in all the papers. For the best running accounts of the confrontation there, see *Pennsylvania Gazette* (Philadelphia), 29 July-21 October 1762; and *Boston-Gazette, and Country Journal*, 9 August-18 October 1762 and 24 January 1763, 1, 4.

93. Preliminary reports that peace was at hand appeared as early as 17 January 1763 in the *Boston Gazette*. A preliminary copy of the peace document ran in the paper on 21 February 1763. The definitive peace treaty appeared on 23 May 1763. The other newspapers ran either identical or similar stories during the same time period.

94. See note 6. Also, none of the secondary sources used to gather background material for this research consulted newspapers as primary or secondary sources.

95. Charles E. Clark, "The Newspapers of Provincial America," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society* 100 (1990): 382, accurately points out that the War of Jenkins Ear and the first preaching tour of George Whitefield, both in 1739-1740, helped transform the content of America's newspapers to issues of intercolonial importance.

96. On newspapers and the Stamp Act, see Phillip Davidson, *Propaganda and the American Revolution, 1763-1783* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1941); Edmund S. Morgan and Helen M. Morgan, *The Stamp Act Crisis: Prologue to Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1953; and Arthur M. Schlesinger, *Prelude to Independence: The Newspaper War on Britain 1764-1776* (New York: Random House, 1958).

97. Newspaper figures are based on personal research and Edward Connery Lathem, comp., *Chronological Tables of American Newspapers, 1690-1820* (Barre, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society & Barre Publishers, 1972. Population figures are taken from *Historical Statistics of the United States: Colonial Times to 1970* (Washington, D.C., 1975), 1168. Population figures are based on the years 1750 and 1760. No figures are available for 1754.

98. Isaiah Thomas, *The History of Printing in America*, 304.

A Romance With *Local* Happenings (never mind what you were taught): Colonial Americans and Their Newspapers

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Abstract

A Romance With *Local* Happenings (never mind what you were taught): Colonial Americans and Their Newspapers

Historians have long supposed that newspaper readers in the American colonies preferred to read foreign news. That was a natural assumption, since many early American newspapers carried an overwhelming number of European reports, easily dominating domestic stories. Given the large amount of foreign news content, it would appear that colonists preferred overseas news to local reports.

But scholars did not look far enough in assessing colonists' outlook toward their newspapers. In their diaries, letters, and other personal papers, eighteenth-century Americans wrote frequently of their enjoyment of domestic intelligence. By contrast, they only rarely mentioned reading or enjoying foreign stories. Seventeenth-century Americans had held foreign reports in high esteem, but they only had foreign newspapers to read. Once American newspapers sprang up in the eighteenth century, readers expressed a clear preference for local news. That appreciation of American news indicated that Americans were beginning their break with Europe, for they were clearly seeing themselves more as Americans and less as Europeans.

A Romance With *Local* Happenings (never mind what you were taught): Colonial Americans and Their Newspapers

As far as Peter Carteret was concerned, newspapers were extremely and *vitally* "Out Landish." There was no gazette in his American colony of Albemarle,[1] where he served as secretary, and that made outlandish foreign newspapers important to the success of his colony and others like it. Why, there was no better way, than through the outlandish news of the paper, to learn the most needed facts about the world. On an extended trip to London in 1675, Carteret pointed out, apparently with a punster's glee,[2] that the "Out Landish" newspapers certainly were serving up a variety of interesting news -- foreign news. The "Inland newes," on the other hand, was the type of stuff he was familiar with in Albemarle as well as in London -- gossip, rumor, and local happenstance. That kind of news best circulated via letter, he explained to his distant cousin, while the gazettes were certainly the best sources of "Out Landish" foreign reports.[3]

Carteret no doubt intended a humorous jibe at the London press of 1675 in his description of it as "outlandish," but he also clearly meant that newspapers of his day were far more authoritative on the topic of foreign news than "inland" domestic letters were. In Peter Carteret's estimation, a newspaper was the most accurate source for news about foreign countries, while letters were the better means for passing along local gossip and chit-chat. Newspapers were the great carriers of foreign news, no matter how outlandishly written.

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[1] Today part of North Carolina. For a reference to Carteret's opinion, see footnote 3 below.

[2] *Oxford English Dictionary* indicates that "outlandish" was used to mean "bizarre," "odd," "uncouth," and the like as early as 1596, so that it is possible that Carteret intended a pun here. It is also possible that Carteret was simply using "outlandish" to mean "foreign," which was another way the word was used in the era. However, it is probable that he meant both, intending a play on words. See the *Dictionary* X, prepared by J.A. Simpson and E.S.C. Weiner (Oxford, England: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 1021.

[3] Peter Carteret to Sir George Carteret, January 1675, in William S. Powell, ed., *Ye Countie of Albemarle in Carolina: A Collection of Documents, 1664-1675* (Raleigh, N.C.: State Department of Archives and History, 1958), pp. 64-65. Peter Carteret wrote this while on an extended trip to London, but he was hoping to return to Albemarle. On p. 3, Powell says in a note that the exact relationship of Peter Carteret and Sir George Carteret remains a mystery. However, it is possible that they were fourth cousins.

Carteret was active in America during the seventeenth century, but he would have been astonished by the time the eighteenth century rolled around. By then, Americans had their own newspapers. Unlike Carteret, they did not have to depend entirely on gazettes produced on foreign shores. And, in spite of the fact that their American newspapers placed a heavy emphasis on foreign news, colonial Americans became devoted to their newspapers as carriers of *local* news. Newspapers continued to carry much overseas intelligence, but Americans cherished their gazettes as tellers of local tales.

That concept might have shocked Carteret, and it certainly would come as a surprise to journalism historians throughout the decades, who have consistently imagined that colonial American readers turned to their newspapers in order to learn foreign news. In his 1873 history of journalism, Frederic Hudson suggested that Americans' thirst for foreign news led to the founding of American newspapers.[4] Seventy-one years later, that interpretation was still in vogue. Sidney Kobre commented in 1944 that early American readers demanded news from abroad. Kobre felt that the *Boston News-Letter* emphasized overseas intelligence because that was how readers expected things to be. "[Publisher John Campbell] had foreign news first, and this was the strong interest of his readers. Colonial news had not become all-important yet. . . . Boston readers [already] knew what had happened there. . . ," Kobre wrote.[5] In 1949, Anna Janney DeArmond stated that colonial newspapers carried very limited amounts of local news, which she "attributed in part to the fact that in the small communities of that day gossip not only spread the happenings of the vicinity, but often spread them more quickly than could a weekly newspaper." Thus, readers did not need a newspaper to tell them of local fare.[6] A decade later, Frank Luther Mott expressed a similar opinion. "News from overseas was the great staple of colonial papers," he wrote. "That is what readers chiefly expected of their papers." After all, Mott said, colonists were "English frontiersmen" and realized that English and European affairs would affect them.[7] In 1994 Wm. David Sloan and Julie Hedgepeth Williams wrote that "like the typical colonial newspaper, [the *American Weekly Mercury*] overlooked local events, on the assumption that local readers would already have heard about them by word of mouth before the paper was published."[8] Donald R. Avery commented in 1996 that the *Boston News-Letter* set a standard of emphasizing foreign news. "This pattern of foreign news dominating newspaper content continued for almost a century," he said. According to Avery, readers had already heard about local events, and thus they had no desire to read about local happenings.[9] Implicit in all of these interpretations was the idea that colonists read the foreign news heavily, considering it paramount over domestic news.

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[4] Frederic Hudson, *Journalism in the United States from 1690 to 1872* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969; reprint of the original 1873 edition), p. 50. (Page numbers refer to 1969 reprint.)

[5] Sidney Kobre, *The Development of the Colonial Newspaper* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1960; reprint of the original 1944 edition), p. 36. (Page numbers refer to 1960 reprint.)

It is not surprising that scholars for well over a century concluded that the colonial newspaper press catered to readers' taste for foreign news. After all, colonial newspaper content was overwhelmingly foreign in emphasis. In most issues, foreign news dominated domestic fare -- or eclipsed it altogether. With that evidence before them, scholars reasoned that if editors continually served their readers a diet of foreign news, their readers must have had a deep interest in that type of intelligence. Using the content of colonial newspapers as a basis of analysis, scholars had almost no other choice in their conclusions.

It is apparent, however, that scholars' examination of newspaper content alone was far too limited. The historical evidence from the colonists themselves contradicts the assumption that they preferred foreign news to domestic stories. Whereas colonial newspaper content was top-heavy with foreign news, colonists' private records were top-heavy with praise, enjoyment, frustration, and discussion of *local* news. Surviving diaries, letters, and other personal writings show clearly that only seventeenth-century Americans such as Peter Carteret conceived of the newspaper primarily as a carrier of foreign news. After American newspapers sprang up in the eighteenth century, Americans grew ever more enamored of their newspapers as tellers of local, American tales. Despite the large percentage of foreign stories at their fingertips, American readers found local stories by far the more significant. They simply had little interest in foreign reports.

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[6] Anna Janney DeArmond, *Andrew Bradford, Colonial Journalist* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1949), pp. 51-52.

[7] Frank Luther Mott, *American Journalism: A History, 1690-1960* 3d edition (New York: Macmillan, 1962; originally published in 1941), p. 48. (Page numbers refer to 1962 edition.)

[8] Wm. David Sloan and Julie Hedgepeth Williams, *The Early American Press, 1690-1783* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), pp. 54-55.

[9] Donald R. Avery, "The Colonial Press, 1690-1765," Chapter 3 of Wm. David Sloan and James D. Startt, eds., *The Media in America: A History* 3d edition (Northport, Ala.: Vision Press, 1996), p. 52.

An Early Desire for Overseas News

Certainly Americans of the seventeenth century agreed with Carteret on the nature of newspapers. To them, newspapers were reliable and informative tools for keeping up with overseas news. This was not a remarkable outlook, for there were no American newspapers printed in that century, save for 1690's short-lived *Publick Occurrences,* which only lasted one issue. Thus, just about all newspapers circulating among seventeenth-century American readers were European, and it was natural that they carried more European reports than American reports. If colonists read a newspaper at all, they had no choice but to read the foreign news. There was also the fact that America was a new place full of pioneers during the seventeenth century. In a sense, newspapers were the eyes and ears of an isolated people who desperately needed to know what was going on in their homelands and in other parts of Europe. If they were to build a miniature Europe in the forests of America, they had to keep current with Europe via the newspaper. Therefore, the European news in foreign newspapers was a vital tool to people who were transferring a culture from one continent to another. Newspapers presented a way to keep abreast of the homeland and to understand what important happenings abroad might affect colonies an ocean away. It was natural, then, that seventeenth-century Americans wrote fondly of the foreign news in the newspapers that they read.

There was no newspaper printed in Massachusetts in August of 1690, for example, so John Cotton, Jr., scribbled down all the Plymouth gossip in a letter for his father. He had apparently picked up the local fare through word-of-mouth means. However, young Cotton turned to the *London Gazette* to furnish news of England. He rushed to meet the latest ship, which had brought a copy of the *Gazette,* detailing all sorts of English affairs. He eagerly recounted the newspaper articles for his father, painstakingly copying the English newspaper into the letter.[10] The elder Cotton also got accurate foreign news from a Mr. Trail in Europe, who copied the foreign affairs information out of the newspapers there for him.[11] In the western part of Massachusetts, John Pynchon constantly wished for newspapers or newsbooks about foreign affairs. When a friend asked him for news of the world in 1645, he moaned, "I have no letters from England nor books of news."[12] When intelligence did come through newsbooks, it merited his attention. In 1667 a Dutchman appeared in Pynchon's town of Springfield, claiming that French newsbooks had told of the defeat of the English fleet by the Dutch. Pynchon clamored for confirmation of this rumor, which seemed shocking to him -- but if it came from a newsbook it certainly must be true, and he wrote hastily to a friend to ascertain the particulars.[13]

During the Glorious Revolution of 1689 and the years following, Americans were caught up in whirlwinds of rumor as Protestant William and Mary took the English throne, ousting Catholic James. Naturally, colonists felt a desperate need to read news

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[10] John Cotton [Jr.] to Rev. John Cotton, 5 August 1690, Curwen Family Manuscript Collection, American Antiquarian Society (Worcester, Mass.), Box 1, Folder 4.

[11] Mr. Trail to Reverend John Cotton, 15 August 1690, Curwen Family Manuscript Collection, American Antiquarian Society (Worcester, Mass.), Box 1, Folder 4. Trail said the news came from a "print," which could have been a news pamphlet as well as a newspaper. However, newspapers were in use at the time, so it is likely he was reading a newspaper for the information.

[12] John Pynchon to John Winthrop, Jr., 22 May 1645, in Carl Bridenbaugh, ed., *The Pynchon Papers, Volume 1: Letters of John Pynchon, 1654-1700* (Boston: Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 1982), p. 5.

[13] John Pynchon to John Winthrop, Jr., 24 January 1666/67, postscript mistakenly dated 1 January 1666, in ibid., p. 72. A newsbook, of course, might have been handwritten; however, the Dutchman may have also been referring to a printed newspaper. Either way, it is interesting that the news in the form of the mass media warranted attention. Bridenbaugh says that the newsbook's information was correct -- the Dutch had won a victory at sea over the English at St. Christopher on 14 June 1666.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

publications from Europe, which would have a clearer view of the upheaval in England. Bostonian Jacob Melyen spent a lot of time and worry in 1691 getting Dutch newspapers for a New York friend who had been imprisoned by political enemies during the upheaval.[14] Melyen managed to obtain fourteen current monthly issues,[15] as well as some back issues.[16] Melyen also sent European newspapers to a friend in New York and begged him to pass them along to other political prisoners.[17] During the aftermath of the Glorious Revolution, Henry Dering of Boston gobbled up printed news about Europe. He wrote to a friend in 1692, "Writing & printing declare, a hellish plott to destroy King Wm in Flanders, & ye Queen in England but discovered; Several Lords Spiritual & temporall in ye Tower & other Prisons. . . ."[18]

Reliance on foreign intelligence in newspapers did not die with the seventeenth century, of course. Eighteenth-century Americans continued to savor foreign reports, even after American newspapers successfully established themselves. Boston Judge Samuel Sewall continued reading the *London Gazette* to get the foreign news,[19] as did many Americans. Friends left behind in England correctly assumed that colonials kept up with English affairs via newspapers. When English Viscount John Perceval was elected to Parliament in 1729, he wrote the news to William Byrd II in Virginia and then apologized for having mentioned it, for Byrd surely had read it in the London newspapers.[20] Byrd did, indeed, read the papers for news of European happenings. "The news papers tell me that Mrs. Southwell succeeds Lady Betty Stanley in being house keeper at Sommerset House," he commented gleefully to Perceval, thrilled that his old friend Mrs. Southwell had gotten the job at the royal residence.[21] Of course, newspaper reports were not always accurate; Perceval wrote back that Betty Southwell had *applied* for the royal housekeepers' job, but she had not *gotten* it.[22]

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[14] Jacob Melyen to Abram Gouvernour, October 1691, in Jacob Melyen Letter Book, 1691-1696, American Antiquarian Society (Worcester, Mass.), p. 44.

[15] Jacob Melyen to Abram Gouvernour, 12 July 1692, in ibid, p. 62.

[16] Jacob Melyen to Abram Gouvernour, October 1691, in ibid., p. 44.

[17] Jacob Melyen letters to Johnannes Kerfbyll dated 13 October 1691 and October 1691 in ibid., pp. 41-42.

[18] Henry Dering to John Cotton, 20 August 1692, Curwen Family Manuscript Collection, American Antiquarian Society (Worcester, Mass.), Box 1, Folder 4.

[19] Diary entry of 24 April 1728 by Samuel Sewall in M. Halsey Thomas, ed., *The Diary of Samuel Sewall, 1674-1729* II (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1973), pp. 241-242.

[20] John Perceval, Viscount Perceval, to William Byrd II, 3 December 1729, in Marion Tinling, ed. *The Correspondence of the Three William Byrds of Westover, Virginia, 1684-1776* I (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1977), p. 420. Scholars commonly describe the three generations of William Byrds as William Byrd I, William Byrd II, and William Byrd III. Although none of the men actually used a number after his name, this study will follow scholarly tradition in order to keep the three straight. The three William Byrds were a father, son, and grandson.

A New Desire for Local News

Americans never quit reading European newspapers, which circulated throughout the colonies during the entire era of colonial settlement. However, as the seventeenth century drew to a close, the desire for a home-grown newspaper began to germinate in Boston. The potential publisher/editor of the paper had to consider the notion of a local newspaper. What would it contain? What would readers want to read? Newspapers were the great carriers of English and other European news, but it was patently obvious that a local newspaper could not possibly print the foreign news before the next ship arrived bearing such news in the *London Gazette* and other newspapers like it. An American newspaper that took foreign news items from European gazettes was automatically defeated as a carrier of foreign occurrences, for European gazettes already carried foreign news to American readers.

Working from such logic, colonial readers and some publishers over time came to think of the American newspaper as an important purveyor of area news. Having built up farms, towns, churches, families, and businesses in the New World, Americans in areas populous enough to support a newspaper had come to realize that they were now Americans, despite deep European heritage and close European ties. It had been important to build up the new colonial settlements with a strong link to Europe, but as colonial civilization grew, it seemed wise to understand and keep up with local happenings.

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[21] William Byrd II to John Perceval, Viscount Perceval, 20 August 1730, in ibid., p. 436.

[22] John Perceval, Viscount Perceval, to William Byrd II, 28 December 1730, in ibid., p. 441.

American occurrences could have a swift and long-lasting effect on readers -- or, of course, hometown news could offer entertaining gossip or tidbits which were all the more enjoyable because the subjects of such items were neighbors and friends.

Benjamin Harris, publisher of America's first newspaper in 1690, recognized the need for local news from the very start. He noted in his Boston newspaper's title that he would try to inform readers of both international *and* local news. In his first and only issue of *Publick Occurrences, both Forreign and Domestick,* Harris noted hopefully that he intended to furnish readers once a month -- "*or if any Glut of* Occurrences *happens,* oftener" -- with faithful accounts of events from diligent observers. The newspaper would describe "Circumstances of Publique Affairs, both abroad and at home," so that readers might better understand the world in general and might better conduct their colonial businesses in particular.[23]

Clearly, Harris thought of *Publick Occurrences* as a recorder of foreign events, and indeed, Americans had considered that to be the primary role of newspapers in the past. But Harris focused most forcefully on Boston. He promised his readers he would print news items submitted by local newswatchers. In Puritan Boston, too, the newspaper had a primary purpose of recording the acts of Divine Providence, so people could see clearly the messages that the Almighty was sending to the community through calamities or blessings. Although certainly such instructional calamities might arise on the international scene, it followed that the most meaningful calamities and events would be regional in nature. The Almighty, after all, would be making comment on Massachusetts citizens' behavior most particularly, and who could illustrate that kind of thing very clearly in a London newspaper? A local newspaper could, essentially, let the reader know what God was thinking about the local community by recording local occurrences. Also, Harris meant for his newspaper to cure rumors, which were so obnoxiously rampant in Boston following the Glorious Revolution. In fact, he promised to squelch ugly, malicious lies by publishing names of people who spread them.[24] Ultimately, he intended to purify Boston of such rascals and lift the people out of the maelstrom of rumor that made it impossible for them to understand what was *really* happening in the colony. Of course, such rumors might spring from London or other places. However, it stood to reason that many malicious spreaders of false report were area people inciting unrest with localized lies. *Publick Occurrences* planned to address those immediate, neighborhood concerns.

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[23] *Publick Occurrences, Both Forreign and Domestick* (Boston, Mass.), 25 September 1690.

Demonstrating his focus on area news, Harris devoted the front page of his three-page paper to Massachusetts occurrences and observations. The front page discussed the Thanksgiving services to be held by the Christianized Indians in Plymouth, as well as the capture of some local white children by barbarous Indians. Another item detailed a local suicide, as well as the spread of fevers, agues, and smallpox in the vicinity. Harris also cited God's hand in the growing of a fine round of crops for the season in Massachusetts. Inside, *Publick Occurrences* continued to show a local emphasis. There had been two terrible fires in Boston. Some twenty-six houses burned to ashes, and a Puritan meeting-house narrowly escaped the same fate with the help of diligent citizens and God. A young man died in one fire, and -- a great tragedy to a newspaperman like Harris -- "the best furnished PRINTING PRESS, of those few that we know of in *America* was lost; a loss not presently to be repaired."[25]

Further news discussed happenings in nearby colonies. A Virginia-bound ship was attacked by French and Indians at a Jersey port; English prisoners escaped from some American Indians; Englishmen in the colonies had successfully done battle with Indians; fifteen Plymouth men died in an attack by hostile Indians because friendly natives grew lazy on their watch. One long piece discussed the planned invasion of French Canada by men from New York, Massachusetts, and Plymouth, along with Indian allies. The invasion was cancelled when the Indians did not furnish canoes as promised.[26]

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[24] Ibid.
[25] Ibid.

There was some foreign news in *Publick Occurrences,* as Harris promised, but it was by far the minor part of the paper. In just a few paragraphs, Harris repeated a rumor about the French king committing incest; reported the taking of St. Christopher Island from the French by the English; noted that King William and two generals had gotten safely to Ireland with their troops; reported that the king was having much success subduing Ireland; and commented that, in two unconfirmed reports, a French prince was rising in revolt against his king, and Irishmen were turning out their French landlords.[27] That was all of the foreign news. Harris left the fourth page blank, presumably so people could add their own news as they circulated the newspaper hand to hand. Undoubtedly most of such handwritten additions would be local in nature.

Unfortunately for Harris, the government of Massachusetts found certain pieces of news in *Publick Occurrences* to be in poor taste and perhaps even dangerous. Samuel Sewall noted in his private journal, "A printed sheet entituled publick Occurrences comes out, which gives much distaste because not Licensed; and because of the passage referring to the French King and the Maquas."[28] Apparently the offensive passages involved the accusation of incest in the French royal family as well as the story about the Maqua Indians causing the cancellation of the military foray into Canada. The governmental council gave the official excuse that the news sheet was not licensed and that it published "Reflections of a very high nature" and "sundry doubtful and uncertain Reports."[29]

The council never specifically mentioned the offensive articles as reasons for banning the newspaper, even though Sewall indicated that the French and Indian articles were the culprits. There were any number of reasons why the council would not have liked those particular news stories -- the King Louis article was in poor taste; perhaps the Indian one was erroneous, as Harris suggested in the newspaper itself;[30] maybe God would punish the colony for so brazen a mention of incest; perhaps Harris showed too heavy a personal opinion regarding the Maquas. Both offensive items, however, had diplomacy in common. Accusations of incest in the French royal family could stir up anti-English sentiment amongst the nearby French in Canada, who were at that moment giving Massachusetts some trouble.[31] Likewise, negative reports about the Indians might cause ill feelings among them, and that could bring a retaliatory attack or a cessation of friendship, neither of which which Massachusetts could afford. It is possible that the ruling powers saw the diplomatic breaches in the newspaper as dangerous to Massachusetts welfare. Perhaps the ruling council considered discussion of local triumphs and tragedies to be acceptable in a newspaper, whereas opinion on diplomatic relations with foreign countries and Indian nations was not appropriate for general circulation. In other words, perhaps newspapers were only safe if they discussed news *within* the colony.

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[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Diary entry of 25 September 1690 by Samuel Sewall in Thomas, vol. I, p. 267. The "Maquas" are today called "Mohawks."

[29] "By the Governour & Council" (Boston: 1690).

Although no one will ever be able to say for sure whether the council thought that non-diplomatic intelligence and local chit-chat made the most appropriate news stories, Puritan cleric Cotton Mather felt that *Publick Occurrences'* successor concentrated far too deeply on such local chit-chat. The next newspaper in America was John Campbell's *Boston News-Letter,* which debuted in 1704. As far as Mather could tell, Campbell had very little to say about anything significant abroad and dwelt far too much on senseless American trivia and meaningless local tidbits. It was an interesting assessment, since Campbell clearly attempted to focus on European news. He frankly stated that goal in the paper itself[32] and appeared to keep to it, running exhaustive foreign reports. Mather, however, fumed in a letter to a friend in 1709:

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[30] *Publick Occurrences, both Forreign and Domestick,* 25 September 1690.
[31] Ibid.

> I am sensible, that you take ye *Boston News-Letter* for a Plain sort of Diet; and that you are more sollicitous to know what the D[uke] of *Marlborough* does at *Vienna;* or the E[arl] of Peterborough does in Catalonia (Both of whom are mighty decried & maligned, by the *High-flyers* of this Day), than what a *Fop in Boots* does at Piscataqua.[33]

In another letter deriding the *News-Letter*, Mather sent the same friend all the news that he was sure the newspaper would omit -- news on Polish affairs, reports on harmony between the Anglican Church and its dissenters in England, and a story on the Lord Mayor of London's kind words for New England.[34] Certainly the news of reconciliation between Anglicans and splinter groups such as Puritans was important, as were kind words from London about New England. It annoyed Mather greatly that the little American paper failed to mention such momentous occurrences. Mather continued to gripe about the *News-Letter's* emphasis on meaningless local news. He complained on another occasion that "our filthy and foolish *News-Letter* here will within this half-year be served *à la mode* of *Piscataqua!"*[35] Mather occasionally looked forward to reading local news in the *News-Letter*, but he remained unimpressed. When Governor John Winthrop of Connecticut died, Mather wanted to publish a sermon about his life because "Our paltry *News-Letter"* balked at writing about honorable men. On the other hand, he huffed, the newspaper was usually quite verbose about baser people.[36]

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[32] See the *Boston News-Letter* (Massachusetts), 20 April 1705.

[33] Cotton Mather to [Stephen Sewall?], 30 February 1709, Curwen Family Manuscript Collection, American Antiquarian Society (Worcester, Mass.), Box 2, Folder 1. The letter was dated "30 11th" [month], which would be 30 November in the modernized calendar. England and her colonies formally adopted the modern Gregorian calendar in 1752. Before that, they used the Julian calendar, which (in Christian countries) featured New Year's Day on March 25. However, before 1752, some colonists accepted the Gregorian calendar, which placed New Year's Day on January 1. When the new year started in March, the eleventh month would be in February. It is difficult to tell which month Mather meant here. It is also difficult to tell which town Mather meant when he referred to Piscataqua. There was a town in present-day New Jersey by that name, and Mott notes that Portsmouth, N.H., also went by "Piscataqua" in that era. See Mott, p. 50. In either case, Mather clearly meant to single out American news as pointless.

[34] Cotton Mather to Stephen Sewall, 2 May 1706, in Silverman, p. 71.

[35] Cotton Mather to Samuel Sewall, 13 December 1707, in ibid., p. 77.

[36] Cotton Mather to John Winthrop, 16 December 1707, in ibid., pp. 76-77.

Apparently the *News-Letter's* shortsightedness about godly people and God's works was at least partially the cause of Mather's hatred. Mather had hoped that *Publick Occurrences* would emphasize God's hand in news events, but the *News-Letter* neglected that important point. Instead, it had a rather mercantile goal of satisfying area merchants and local advertisers.[37] Only a year after he founded the paper did Campbell chance to mention in an offhanded way that he hoped the *News-Letter* was illustrating God's will.[38] But the *News-Letter,* in Mather's opinion, was usually too secular. However, when King George I ascended to the throne in 1715, writers for the *News-Letter* did see the hand of God in the accession and reported it as such. Mather was pleased. ". . . [Y]our common news-writers, who do not use to burden their papers with too much piety, can't forbear frequent confessions, That it is the work of almighty GOD," he commented. It was, at last, a compliment to the *News-Letter's* interpretation of overseas news, but it was a backhanded compliment at best.[39]

For Cotton Mather, the fledgling American newspaper press was far too trivial in reporting, offering pointless local news and avoiding significant developments abroad or significant interpretation of God's work. Likewise, he complained, it published only old news. Despite all of that, he still read the *New-Letter.*[40] However, he would rather have had a newspaper that was timely, interpretive, international, and inspirational.

An American Outlook

Vocal as he was on the provincial nature of the *News-Letter,* Mather apparently misread the sentiments of his fellow Americans. As newspapers began appearing, colonists up and down the seaboard fell in love with the press as a way to find out American news. True, there was abundant foreign news in American gazettes -- even if there was not enough such news for Mather. Certainly readers took note of the foreign news. Georgia President William Stephens, for instance, felt a knot in his stomach when he read a South Carolina newspaper's account of the French fleet sailing through the English channel in an apparent invasion attempt in 1744. "This was enough to set us all into a Quandary," he commented, "and our Impatience hitherto under the want of Intelligence from England during so long a time, now encreased exceedingly, in proportion to the Regard that every honest man has to his King and Country."[41] In Massachusetts, preacher Isaac Backus read an interesting piece of news about a 1755 earthquake in Iberia. Printed news pamphlets about the earthquake spread quickly through the local community and were shortly reprinted in Boston.[42] Backus subscribed to local newspapers to get "intelligence of many great comotions [*sic*] among the Nations," which he saw as indicators of the Almighty's displeasure.[43] Those uses of the press for foreign news were important and cannot be downplayed. Colonists did mention foreign newspaper stories -- but only occasionally. Proportionately, Americans devoted only small amounts of space in their personal writings to commentary on foreign news.

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[37] *Boston News-Letter,* 24 April 1704.
[38] Ibid., 30 April 1705.
[39] Cotton Mather to Timothy Woodbridge, 20 January 1715, in Silverman, p. 168.
[40] Cotton Mather to John Winthrop, 15 October 1716, in ibid., p. 219.

Far more frequently, eighteenth-century Americans savored their newspaper press as the teller of American and intercolonial stories -- local things, close-to-home news. Time and time again when they mentioned newspapers in their correspondence or private writings, colonists recalled hometown, in-colony or inter-colonial stories as being important and worthy of comment. Even though any given issue of colonial newspapers would often contain more foreign than local news, Americans had a natural attraction to the local items. They loved American news and were in general far more excited about it than about international stories.

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[41] Journal entry of 7 May 1744 by William Stephens in E. Merton Coulter, ed., *The Journal of William Stephens* II (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1959), p. 101.

[42] Diary entries of 30 November and 21 December 1755 in William G. McLoughlin, ed., *The Diary of Isaac Backus* I (Providence, R.I.: Brown University Press, 1979), pp. 395-396. McLoughlin gives the information on the reprints. They were entitled *Two very circumstantial Accounts of the late dreadful Earthquake at Lisbon* and *An Account of the late Dreadful Earthquake* (both Boston: 1756).

[43] Diary entry of 18 September 1757 in McLoughlin, vol. I, p. 460.

On the very day that Bartholomew Green pulled the first *Boston News-Letter* from his press in 1704, Samuel Sewall proudly carried a copy across the Charles River to Cambridge and gave it to a preacher there.[44] Although the new *News-Letter* emphasized foreign news, it did contain local fare -- and Sewall, for one, found the Massachusetts news to be of high value. One story which Sewall treasured was an exciting, multi-installment tale of the capture of pirates off the coast of the colony a few weeks after the paper was founded. The articles were thick with names of area citizens and details of their heroics in attempting to round up the lawless crew. Sewall had helped organize a party to the capture the criminals, and his brother had led a group that arrested the lion's share of the men.[45] A delighted Sewall saved copies of the newspapers which had reported the incident.[46] His interest in Massachusetts news was not limited to stories featuring his own heroism, however. In 1718, for instance, Sewall sent his brother a certain issue of the *News-Letter* because it contained information on a Boston court action that would affect him personally.[47] He often clipped such local intelligence for friends and relatives.[48] Sewall very much enjoyed reading the *News-Letter* for other ordinary bits of local information, and he spoke often of these in his diary. Obituaries were of high interest to him, as were colonial political matters and local political speeches as reported by the newspaper.[49] Another *News-Letter* reader, Benjamin Colmun of Boston, sent a copy of the paper to a friend in Salem to inform him of some significant news from New York.[50] Although such mentions of colonial news came up with some regularity in Bostonians' comments about the *News-Letter,* by contrast, readers only rarely mentioned the foreign news in the paper.

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[44] Diary entry of 24 April 1704 by Samuel Sewall in Thomas, vol. I, pp. 501-502.

[45] *Boston News-Letter,* 29 May, 12 June, 19 June, and 3 July 1704.

[46] Diary entry of 9 June 1704 by Samuel Sewall in Thomas, vol. I, p. 506. In the entry, Sewall directed himself to "See the News-Letter." He kept the newspaper over time and bound it into volumes, but he made special mention of that series of articles.

[47] Diary entry of 11 March 1718 by Samuel Sewall in ibid., p. 889.

[48] Diary entry dated 29 December 1722-12 January 1723 by Sewall in ibid., vol. II, p. 1004. Also, Richard D. Brown quotes Sewall's letter book regarding the sending of newspapers to a friend. Brown seems to indicate the friend was Rev. Edward Taylor, Sewall's old college roommate. See Brown, *Knowledge is Power: The Diffusion of Information in Early America, 1700-1865* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 38. Brown cites *Letter-Book of Samuel Sewall* II, which appears in *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society,* 6h series, I (Boston: Massachusetts Historical Society, 1886), p. 105. The letter was written by Sewall on 16 and 17 February 1720.

[49] See diary entry of 13 December 1725 by Samuel Sewall in Thomas, vol. II, for instance. Sewall referred to such things in many other entries as well.

Southward in Charleston, the *South-Carolina Gazette* encouraged a local focus, as many colonial newspapers did. In its opening number in 1732, the *Gazette* asked readers to write and submit articles about local issues.[51] Indeed, many colonial newspapers thrived on submissions from the readership -- most, if not all, papers featured letters, poems, essays, or articles from colonial sources other than the printer himself or herself. The *South-Carolina Gazette's* readers were typical. One reader sent in an essay arguing that the colony needed to encourage education for the young, citing better education in other colonies. Youthful South Carolinians particularly needed to learn about literature, the writer said.[52] Proving that such local articles had a local readership, a humorist responded: "*To the* Authr Gazitt. Sr. what do yo tell us of yr Larnin & exampels of our Naboring colonees pish don't yo no that Strangors were alwase perferd here. . . ." He added a poem:

> LEARNING that Cobweb of the Brain,
> Profane, erroneous, and vain,
> A Trade of Knowledge, as replete
> As others are with Fraud and Cheat.[53]

Local people also made interesting copy to other readers. When an anonymous reader wrote in questioning *Gazette* editor Thomas Whitmarsh's wisdom at founding "so stupid a Project" as the newspaper, Whitmarsh responded by insinuating that the writer had a gambling problem.[54] Another reader in return made a plea that Whitmarsh not endanger his valuable enterprise with such reflections on individual citizens. Whitmarsh was repentant.[55] Meanwhile, a gambler calling himself "Whisk" wrote to the paper, asking Whitmarsh to assure his cronies that he had not written the offending letter. Good-naturedly, Whitmarsh replied, addressing Whisk's friends, "I give 'em leave to admit [Whisk] twice or thrice a Week, provided they send him Home in good Time. For 'tis well-known, by his Good-will, he'd ne'er budge 'till Day-break."[56] The gossipy exchange involving Charlestonians as subject matter apparently created a lot of local interest, for the writers continued batting it about for a month in the newspaper.

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[50] Benjamin Colmun to Stephen Sewall, 1 September 1712, Curwen Family Manuscript Collection, American Antiquarian Society, (Worcester, Mass.), Box 2, Folder 1.

[51] *South-Carolina Gazette* (Charleston), 8 January 1732.

[52] Ibid., 1 April 1732.

[53] Ibid., 22 April 1732.

[54] Ibid., 22 January 1732.

One of Whitmarsh's successors as *Gazette* editor, Elizabeth Timothy, stirred up a hornet's nest among her readers in 1743 by asking for local opinion on the state of matrimony. After getting a mournful poem from a female reader calling for equal treatment under the law for both men and women,[57] a male subscriber wrote back in verse suggesting sassily that the writer only needed a good man in her life to cure her distress. "The healing Balm then Miss you'll find, /From whence you'll not so vex, /Nor evermore prove so unkind, /As you have to my sex," he wrote.[58] Other readers, clearly entertained by the subject, responded; the opinion of their neighbors was interesting and worthy of comment. A woman submitted a verse:

> How wretched is a woman's Fate,
> No happy change her Fortune knows,
> Subject to Man in every state.
> How can she then be free from woes?
>
> In Youth a Father's stern Command,
> And jealous Eyes controul her will;
> A lordly Brother watchful stands,
> To keep her closer Captive still.

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[55] Ibid., 29 January 1732.
[56] Ibid., 12 February 1732.
[57] Ibid., 15 August 1743.
[58] Ibid., 22 August 1743.

The tyrant Husband next appears,
With awful and contracted brow;
No more a Lover's form he wears,
Her Slave's become her Sov'reign now.[59]

And a gentleman also responded:

How happy is a Woman's fate,
Free from Care, and free from Woe,
Secure of Man in ev'ry state,
Her Guardian-God below!
. . . .
'Tis Man's to labour, toil, and sweat,
And all his Care employ,
Honour, or Wealth, or Pow'r to get;
'Tis Woman's to enjoy.[60]

Elizabeth Timothy proved that South Carolina authors and readers got a kick out of seeing South Carolina opinion in their own newspaper.

Sometimes, however, the scope was a little broader. Readers also read news from surrounding colonies, and they found those news items to be meaningful as well. Picking up a *Boston News-Letter* in 1741, Cadwallader Colden was appalled by a story from New York about the execution of six Negroes. Five were hanged, and one died by burning at the stake. All had been accused of plotting an uprising to destroy the city of New York. Colden hastily grabbed a pen and paper to admonish a friend in New York about the action. ". . . [T]he same terrible Executions amongst You upon this occasion puts me in mind of our New England Witchcraft in ye Year 1692," he wrote. "Well if I don't Mistake New York justly reproach'd us for it, mock'd at our Credulity about [believing in witches] . . . ." Colden suspected that much of the evidence against the Negroes was as flimsy as evidence of witchcraft in Salem. Furthermore, the *News-Letter* reported that the man who died at the stake had made a last-minute statement implicating many more people, including whites. Colden warned against believing such confessions, as had been done in Salem. He was convinced that the condemned made such accusations in hopes of winning a longer time to live or a less gruesome death. Certainly, he felt, the Negroes might have been exacting revenge for the inhumanity they suffered, "which is too ripe in the English Plantations." Colden begged his friend to submit the letter for publication in the newspaper in New York, for, as he put it, "too much can't be said or done, to prevent Barbarity" such as had been experienced in Salem in 1692.[61]

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[59] Ibid., 21 November 1743.
[60] Ibid.

Colden was not the only reader who found news from other colonies to be significant. James Hicks was so excited about a 1745 *Boston Gazette* article regarding American soldiers in nearby Canada that he rushed to his friend Ebenezer Parkman to let him read it. According to the *Gazette,* both ground and naval forces were making a great success in a battle against the French there.[62] Likewise, Governor James Wright of Georgia read the *South-Carolina Gazette* for items of interest from around the colonies. To his dismay one day in 1763, he learned that South Carolina had granted its leading citizens some lands which Georgia also claimed. It promised to be a thorny issue to unravel, as he complained to the Board of Trade in London.[63] William Stephens, another governmental official in colonial Georgia, also searched the papers for colonial news. He was dismayed to learn from a South Carolina newspaper that the ship *Anne*, which had only just departed an American port, had foundered. Stephens was afraid she had taken much of his official correspondence to England with her to the bottom of the sea.[64] Far away in Massachusetts, Reverend Isaac Backus grabbed up the nearest newspapers with interest as he traced the progress of the famous evangelist George Whitefield, who was on a preaching tour through America in 1763. Backus fervently hoped that Whitefield would travel all the way to New England.[65]

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[61] Cadwallader Colden to [a New York City gentleman], written during August and September 1741, Curwen Family Manuscript Collection, American Antiquarian Society (Worcester, Mass.), Box 3, Folder 1.

[62] Diary entry of 5 June 1745 by Ebenezer Parkman in Francis G. Walett, ed., *The Diary of Ebenezer Parkman, 1703-1782*I (Worcester, Mass.: American Antiquarian Society, 1974), p. 118.

[63] Governor James Wright to Board of Trade, 6 May 1763, in Kenneth Coleman and Milton Ready, eds., *Colonial Records of the State of Georgia: Original Papers of Governors Reynolds, Ellis, Wright, and Others, 1757-1763* XXVIII, Part 1 (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1976), pp. 427-428.

[64] Journal entry of 21 May 1743 by William Stephens in Coulter, vol. I, p. 206.

[65] Diary entry of 10 March 1763 by Isaac Backus in McLoughlin, vol. I, p. 537, and diary entry of 22 September 1763 by Isaac Backus in ibid., vol. II, p. 594.

Even local obituaries made for important reading. When the lovely Evelyn Byrd died in 1737, her father, William Byrd II, wrote an acrostic poem honoring her. He submitted it to the *Virginia Gazette* for publication:

> Ever constant to her friends
> Vigilant in truth's defense
> Entertaining to her end
> Life! brimful of eloquence.
> Youth in person; age in sense
> Nature gave her store immense.
>
> But she's fled and is no more
> Yonder soars in fields of light!
> Robbed of all our little store,
> Death! oh Death! we're ruined quite.[66]

Despite the poem to his late daughter, Byrd did not always enjoy reading such home-grown literary offerings in the *Virginia Gazette.* He complained more than once that the *Gazette* carried no real news whatsoever.[67] However, his own poem would help assuage his grief and keep his daughter's memory alive.

New Englander Matthew Adams found obituaries in the *Boston News-Letter* to be instructive and valuable as illustrations of holy living. When his godly nephew died, the grief-stricken Adams turned to the press to try to make sense of his nephew's untimely decease. Adams sent a short account of his nephew's death and burial, "with a hint at his Character," to the *News-Letter's* staff for publication. Adams looked forward to the article, but he mourned its inadequacy -- it could not possibly be long enough to do justice to the young man.[68] But at least it was there and would offer a public memorial to the beloved family member. Reverend Ebenezer Parkman also felt that obituary stories taught important lessons. When parishioner Jonas Child hanged himself in his Massachusetts barn in 1750, Parkman prayed fervently that the tragic death would somehow lead everyone in his congregation higher toward divine grace.[69] A few days later, Parkman's prayer was answered when someone sent an account of Child's death to printer Samuel Kneeland for publication in the *Boston Gazette*.[70] To Parkman, who valued local newspaper stories so much that he used them as bases for sermons,[71] an account in the press of a tragedy so close to home would certainly touch many a reader.

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[66] *Virginia Gazette* (Williamsburg), 2 December 1737. The poem was anonymous, but scholars think it was probably written by Byrd.

[67] Diary entries of 21 April and 22 March 1741 in Maude H. Woodfin, ed., *Another Secret Diary of William Byrd of Westover, 1739-1741, with Letters & Literary Exercises, 1696-1726*, translated from shorthand by the editor (Richmond, Va.: The Dietz Press, 1942), pp. 144, 149.

[68] Matthew Adams to Josiah Cotton, 31 January 1739/40, Curwen Family Manuscript Collection, American Antiquarian Society (Worcester, Mass.), Box 3, Folder 1.

Indeed, as Parkman suspected, people did read local stories in the newspaper faithfully. When smallpox attacked in Boston in 1752, the governing council called for a public day of fasting to pray for the cessation of the disease. The council did not bother to issue a printed proclamation on the fast as it normally did, but the council did insert the call for a fast day in the *Boston Gazette*. Since there was no formal proclamation, Parkman convinced himself that few people would show up to hear the special sermon he had planned. He shelved the sermon and offered another one, but to his surprise, he had a remarkably good congregation after all. Apparently, a lot of Bostonians had read the *Gazette* quite thoroughly.[72] Ever devoted to local news items himself, Parkman was grateful when his cousin sent him a London news publication detailing American affairs. He especially wanted to read about and understand English and French claims to various American lands.[73] After all, such viewpoints might directly affect Massachusetts.

Many Americans, like Parkman, had an interest in the tug-of-war between the world powers for America, which manifested itself most pointedly during the French and Indian War between 1754 to 1763. Publisher Peter Timothy of the *South-Carolina Gazette* actually stopped the presses and typeset his paper all over again to deliver news of an important victory in the Ohio territory in 1758 -- news that, in his opinion, his readership was anxiously awaiting.[74] Far away on the battlefield, soldiers assumed that their loved ones and friends would be able to read about their exploits in the local newspapers, which surely carried minute details of battle. Soldier David Wyer wrote to Samuel Curwen about various skirmishes against the Indians in 1759. No doubt, Wyer commented, Curwen had read at least part of the story in the newspapers. Wyer filled in the other part.[75] Maria Taylor Byrd, writing from Virginia the following year to her soldier son in the field, devoured each newspaper she got for war reports. "Your express is just returned the 19th day of this month and has lent me the last news-paper," she wrote to her son. "I find what relates to Col. Montgomery is not as Mr. Davis told me, but in truth, 'tis bad enough."[76] A year later she was still clinging to the newspaper for scraps of information about troop movements. She wrote an anxious letter:

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[69] Diary entry of 21 May 1750 by Ebenezer Parkman in Walett, vol. I, pp. 216-217.

[70] Diary entry of 28 May 1750 by Ebenezer Parkman in ibid., p. 217.

[71] Diary entries of 28 September and 27 November 1755 by Ebenezer Parkman, for instance, show Parkman preaching about local troops fighting at Crown Point and about a local earthquake, respectively. See ibid., pp. 295, 298.

[72] Diary entry of 2 July 1752 by Ebenezer Parkman in ibid., p. 258.

[73] Diary entry of 9 October 1755 by Ebenezer Parkman in ibid., p. 296.

> My most dear & ever bless'd son,
>
> Various & many have been the reports concern[ing] you of late. The news papers said you had receive'd orders from General Amherst to go against the Indians immediately, & Mr. Couts that return'd from Agusta [*sic*] about 10 or 12 days ago said he hear'd there you was gone to Philadelphia, so that I knew not what to think: but thank God your letter has made me perfectly easy, as this campaign is likely to put a finishing stroke to your military engagement, which my daughter[-in-law] Byrd cannot pray more heartily for than my self.

Apparently, the newspaper was the more accurate of the two reports she had heard.[77]

By and large, colonists found the American news in their weekly gazettes to be more interesting, more worthy of comment, than foreign news. They spoke of local news often and fondly, only occasionally mentioning overseas intelligence in their diaries and letters. European news was abundant, and local news was often more scarce in colonial newspapers, but local fare obviously had a large and devoted readership. Locally written opinion, obituaries of area people, and stories of nearby news events all held readers' attention. A great many Americans enjoyed reading about themselves and their fellow colonists, and they loved to discuss the area news in their diaries and letters. Local news, it was clear, won their hearts. Simply put, Americans were attracted to local news.

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[74] *South-Carolina Gazette,* 29 December 1758.

[75] David Wyer to Samuel Curwen, 29 August 1759, Curwen Family Manuscript Collection, American Antiquarian Society (Worcester, Mass.), Box 3, Folder 3.

[76] Maria Taylor Byrd to William Byrd III, 15 August 1760, in Tinling, vol. II, p. 701.

[77] Maria Taylor Byrd to William Byrd III, 29 June 1761, in ibid., p. 737. For the accuracy of the newspaper report, see William Byrd III to General Jeffery Amherst in ibid., 7 June 1761, pp. 735-736, and Minutes of Governor and Council, 23 June 1761, in ibid., pp. 736-737.

Thus, the newspaper, originally the vital seventeenth-century carrier of overseas news, underwent a change in America of the eighteenth century. Once primarily the record of "outlandish" foreign news, in colonists' eyes newspapers became treasuries of local reports. When they got their own newspapers, colonists began depending on them and enjoying them for their hometown and intercolonial stories. European papers by definition could carry American intelligence only in limited quantity. Colonists realized this and eagerly read and frequently commented on the American stories in their newspapers. Although Americans never lost their desire to understand foreign stories, the concept that American news was of paramount interest was evident from *Publick Occurrences* onward. Someone needed to record American events in ink and paper. European publications had other interests. The task fell to the local periodical press, and Americans welcomed it with excitement.

That outlook toward the eighteenth-century press indicated, in a subtle way, that American civilization had arrived, had put down roots. Newspaper readers focused on local happenings. Europe was still important, but that was another lifetime ago. The new cities and plantations in America were in the now, and readers felt the genuine need to understand area events so that they might better make their way in their new homeland.

The arrival of American newspapers and readers' growing support of local intelligence, then, illustrated the fact that the colonists were beginning a subtle break from Mother Europe. Local news, so eagerly devoured by colonial readers, actually helped nudge colonists ever further from Europe, for it offered them a clear view of the evolving American community. It was a view they appreciated greatly. Eventually that much-enjoyed glimpse into other American lives would help colonial readers see themselves as a separate people with a different set of interests than their European brethren.

WHEN WOMEN SPEAK: A COMPARISON OF THE VOICES OF BLACK WOMEN JOURNALISTS BEFORE AND AFTER THE CIVIL WAR

by

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ABSTRACT

Prior to the nineteenth century, the voices of black women had been primarily silent. However, by the late 1820s, a few individual voices moved to the forefront of the abolitionist movement to fight for blacks' enfranchisement and full-citizenship rights. By the end of the Civil War, this influence had expanded and black women journalists were assuming an even greater role in the development of the race. The newspapers and magazines to which they contributed articles and letters, as well as their journals, pamphlets, and personal correspondence, provide some insight into their philosophies that influenced their choice of topics. Their written works reflected the major concerns of the period and the priorities that motivated their actions and occupied their thoughts. This study compares how those concerns and the roles of the women were influenced or altered by changing societal rules before and after the Civil War.

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The position of black women in nineteenth-century American society was unique--differing from white females', as well as both white and black males'. Responsibility to both their gender and their race placed an immense burden upon the shoulders of educated free black women, but it also provided them with the chance to extend their influence into the community, as well as into American society.

Never before in the history of the race had black women played such a large part in the advancement of blacks than they did during and after the Civil War. Their duties had previously been confined to the home, supplying cohesiveness to the family structure -- venturing outside the home only to assist in matters regarding church, school, and their immediate black community. However, these wives, sisters, and daughters of some of the better educated members of black society began to move to the forefront of the societal struggles in order to "glorify [their] womanhood by idealizing the various phases of [their] character, by digging from the past examples of faithfulness and sympathy, endurance and self-sacrifice and displaying the achievements which were brightened by friction."[1]

The newspapers and magazines to which they contributed articles and letters, as well as their journals, pamphlets, and personal correspondence, provide some insight into the philosophies that influenced their choice of topics. Their written works reflected the major concerns of the period and the priorities that motivated their actions and occupied their thoughts. This study compares how those concerns and the roles of the women were influenced or altered by changing societal rules before and after the Civil War. The years immediately preceding the Civil War were ones of depression and hopelessness for blacks in the United States, and the approximately four million blacks in the country were caught in the middle of this battle between the North and the South. However, there were more opportunities for black women journalists after the war, with more than 2000 black newspapers and journals in operation, as compared to only about 40 before the war. The women also wrote for a mainly female and abolitionist audience before the war, while the audience was more black mainstream after the war.

Black newspapers of this period served the informational and advocacy-oriented needs of the communities of free-born blacks and former slaves -- a race fragmented by education, employment, and social standing. For these readers, the black press promoted abolition, while acting as a black spokesman, chronicler, and teacher.

However, the most significant role for black women was that of teacher. They were the teachers not only of their families and their classrooms, but often of their race. Historian Richard Cook reasoned that woman was the center of all things necessary for the advancement of society. He declared:

> All true religion, all refined society, all domestic happiness, originate in the moral sentiments and attributes of the heart; Woman is chiefly distinguished for the possession and exercise of these sentiments and attributes.
> Therefore is woman chiefly the conservator of religion, the author of refined society, and the source of domestic happiness.[2]

Black women were required to teach these moral sentiments and attributes, as well as guide the members of their race, particularly the children, into a better way of life. By speaking out in public, writing prose and poetry, organizing antislavery activities, and circulating petitions against slavery and other ills that threatened the advancement of their race, they not only defied customary modes of behavior, but also redefined the roles of women in the community. However, the women would soon discover that their duties and responsibilities to the black community as a whole were not over.[3]

Following the Union victory in the Civil War in 1865, the atmosphere changed for blacks to one of anticipation rather than hopelessness. Blacks, including those who were experiencing freedom for the first time, were promised full citizenship, as well as various civil rights that their new status deserved. The Civil Rights Act and the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, along with other congressional actions, attempted to grant blacks more rights than they had ever received before in this nation.

Despite these promises of improved status in American society, blacks soon began to realize that these new opportunities were still being denied to them by members of the white society and that they would have to turn to their own press once again.

However, after the Civil War, not only did the role of the black press change, but so did the reporters and editors who sustained it. The black press was thrust into the position of trying to hold onto those advantages already achieved by blacks, while pushing for changes and an end to white racism. The black newspapers and magazines still emphasized the predominant concerns of blacks before the war, but these concerns took on an even greater importance. Similarly, women assumed a more important role in improving the lifestyle of American blacks, while adding their own voices to the struggle.

Issues addressed most often by these women journalists were civil rights, personal improvement, moral elevation, and racial equality -- all topics emphasized by their black male counterparts, as well as their black sisters to a lesser degree, before 1860. The black press welcomed their contributions to the black cause and "...as well-equipped young women emerged from the class-room [sic] the brotherhood of the race, men whose energies have been repressed and distorted by the interposition of circumstances, give them opportunities to prove themselves; and right well are they doing by voice and pen."[4]

Public Expression and Words of Protest

Perhaps the most difficult task for black women before the war was speaking out in public. Men had long engaged in public debates and speeches as an acceptable means of self-expression and protest, but not until the 1840s did women begin to gain support for raising their voices before an audience.[5] Ironically, those topics which threatened to destroy the race--slavery, immoral behavior, and lack of education--served to bring black men and women together in a common cause, to abolish slavery and provide for the advancement of the race.

Protesting the evils of slavery, sin, and prejudice was a risky undertaking for any individual--whether risking their reputation or their physical well-being--but particularly so for a black female. Many men and women probably feared that delivering speeches would require that black women leave their homes and, consequently, abandon their domestic responsibilities, a definite threat to racial survival. Despite the lack of support from black males, those black women who chose to speak in public were often at the mercy of hostile audiences who harassed and ridiculed them. Maria Stewart, a black teacher and writer, received the dubious honor of being the first American-born woman to make a public address. In 1832 in Boston, black men jeered at Stewart and pelted her with rotten tomatoes after she delivered a speech that criticized them for gambling, frivolity, intemperance, and laziness.[6] What made Stewart's societal *faux pas* worse was the fact that she also attacked the behavior of the men of her own race, even though she also denounced white males and females as well. Black men applauded black women as speakers only if they avoided directly criticizing black males or if they did not attempt to assume positions of authority in groups in which men participated.[7] Stewart's words were harsh and accusatory, criticizing the conduct of these individuals and challenging them to improve themselves and the condition of blacks in the United

States. The situation had changed little in 1856 when Mary Ann Shadd Cary met with resistance to her proposed speech before the eleventh Colored Nation Convention in Philadelphia. She was finally allowed to speak, but not before a lengthy discussion and a vote among male delegates.[8]

Even by turning to the written word, black women found little solace or protection from those who felt that women's opinions were best when confined within the walls of their homes. Therefore, nineteenth-century black women journalists were hardly welcomed with open arms before 1860. Historian Rodger Streitmatter's essay "African-American Women Journalists and Their Male Editors: A Tradition of Support" declared that these black women journalists were unhampered by the gender discrimination of American men,[9] but this conclusion can be generalized only for black women writers after the Civil War. The six case studies Streitmatter cited--Gertrude Bustill Mossell, Delilah Beasley, Ida Wells Barnett, Marvel Cooke, Lucile Bluford, and Ethel Payne--all depicted women working in the newsrooms after 1870.[10]

The country, as well as the black community, had undergone numerous changes during the years after the war. Women, both black and white, left their families in the north and ventured to the south to aid in preparing the newly emancipated blacks for their position in American society, becoming a visible part of the reconstruction process in the classroom and in the community. In 1889, Smith wrote: " The Negro man, having had his sister by his side on plantations and in rice swamps, keeps her there, now that he moves in other spheres."[11] Two years later, Mossell declared:

"As reporters, women are treated with the courtesy due their sex."[12] This was not the reception black women could expect before 1860. Few male editors were willing to offer space in their newspapers to black women journalists before the war, with the exception of white abolitionists William Lloyd Garrison and Benjamin Lundy or those editors whose wives assisted in the operation of the papers.[13] Mary Ann Shadd Cary and her sister, Amelia Shadd, were also an exception because they operated their own paper.[14] Even *Liberator* editor Garrison ran a disclaimer when black lecturer Maria Stewart's criticisms of the male-dominated society extended beyond the boundaries of acceptability.[15]

In order to express themselves freely, black women journalists implemented a variety of tactics. Mary Ann Shadd Cary was forced to relinquish control of her paper, the *Provincial Freeman*, for a time because her readers did not think it appropriate for a woman to operate a newspaper.[16] To avoid conflict or perhaps because of the sensitivity of the topics black women writers addressed, many resorted to the use of pseudonyms or anonymity. Sarah Mapps Douglass, a Philadelphian school teacher, contributed numerous items to the *Liberator* and other publications on such topics as education and religion under the names of "Sophanisba" and "Zillah," while abolitionist Sarah Louise Forten provided poetry and prose under the signatures of "Magawisca," "Ada," and "A."[17] Mary Miles Bibb achieved much the same purpose by writing under the guise of "editor" of the *Voice of the Fugitive*, while her husband, Henry Bibb, traveled throughout Canada and the United States on antislavery lecture tours.[18]

The cloak of invisibility, or the need to operate almost in secret, diminished considerably after the war. Some alternated between their own names and pseudonyms, such as Victoria Earle Matthews' "Bert Islew" or Ida Wells-Barnett's "Iola", while others used their names preceded by the "Mrs." designation or their husbands' name -- such as "Mrs. Gertrude Mossell" or "Mrs. C.C. Strumm."[19]

No matter what name was used, writing offered an additional challenge for black women of both periods--that of combating stereotypes of intellectual inferiority. Most were teachers, and all were either born into free middle-class black families or married into rank, as Stewart did.[20] With the exception of Stewart, all the women received a thorough education from tutors and in normal schools, while Douglass later attended medical school and Cary earned a law degree.[21] Their education was reflected in the quality of their writing, and they served as role models for other black women eager to try their hand at becoming journalists, while Cary broke the gender barrier as the first black female publisher.[22] Ida Wells-Barnett, Amelia Johnson, Julia Ringwood Coston, and Florida Ridley and Georgia St. Pierre Ruffin would all follow in Cary's footsteps before the end of the nineteenth century.[23]

Several common themes emerged from the writings of these black women journalists in both times: the need for education, self-improvement, religious values, racial equality, and racial cohesiveness. Their works took the form of speeches, essays, dialogues, songs, and poetry--utilizing characterizations, such as

Douglass' "Ella"[24], or analogies, such as Stewart's comparison of nineteenth-century women to a thirteenth-century "young lady of Bologne" who studied Latin and law.[25] These forms were still prevalent after the war, such as Johnson's moralistic portrayals of fictionalized "Corinne" and the "Hazeley family". However, the straight-forward editorial approach dominated the writings of Wells-Barnett. Despite the diversity of writing styles and forms, the messages were often the same: improve the status and condition of blacks in the United States.

Personal Improvement

From the outset of the first black newspaper in the United States, editors declared that poverty, unemployment, and the lack of education and money-management skills were obstacles to be surmounted before blacks could establish a place for themselves in society.[26]

The women all maintained that education was one of the keys to improving the condition of free blacks and for gaining acceptance into American society as full citizens. The message was not a new one. According to early nineteeth-century black writers and leaders, education was necessary for several reasons: (1) It provided blacks with a refined language and polished manners that would permit them to assimilate into American society. (2) Through education, blacks could also gain the knowledge and skills necessary to acquire jobs and to establish and maintain financial security. (3) Education would also serve to draw black males away from the saloons and tobacco houses and guide them into lecture rooms and libraries. (4) It would force whites to abandon racial prejudice and realize that blacks could be their moral and intellectual equals.[27]

Black women writers before the war frequently addressed these ideas and supported their value, bringing the lessons they had taught their students in the classroom to the columns of the newspapers and journals. They addressed the need for a strong religious background, in addition to lessons in arithmetic, writing, and reading. Some black women, such as Stewart and Douglass, promoted expansion of the lessons to include foreign languages, higher math, literature, philosophy, and physiology.[28] For Stewart, an expanded curriculum would improve blacks' chances for acceptance into society as individuals capable of thinking for themselves and conducting their own lives. Douglass, who attended medical school to increase her own knowledge of physiology and anatomy, believed that blacks, particularly women, owed it to themselves, as well as to their posterity, to learn about health to maintain the physical and mental well-being of the race.[29] The women were also concerned with who would control what the children learned. Douglass, fearful that the Philadelphia Anti-Slavery Society was exerting too much control over her school through the regular funding and suggestions it offered, refused further support from the organization and struggled to maintain the school on the precarious income she could acquire from her students.[30]

Financial support also raised the question of whether the school should be conducted as segregated or integrated, and the women often disagreed over the solution to the problem. Cary argued that a segregated school promoted racial prejudice and distrust because whites and blacks would not be allowed to interact with each other and experience the cultural differences of each other. Bibb felt that segregated schools, which were usually government-funded, were preferable because of the opportunity for regular funding and better conditions.[31]

Editors, both male and female, after the Civil War deemed education -- in the form of basic reading and writing, along with labor training -- as the basis for blacks' social development. They asserted:

> The burdens of oppression and prejudice, as a rule, have deprived them [black Americans] not only of the results of their own toil, but in large measure of all educational opportunities and social advantages. They have been excluded almost wholly from assuming high and honorable public responsibilities together with accompanying emoluments.[32]

This philosophy was particularly prevalent among black women journalists. Like their black male counterparts, they were staunch supporters of an industrious black race. Victoria Earle Matthews, reporter for such newspapers as the *National Leader*, the *New York Age*, the New York *Globe*, and *Southern Christian Recorder*, advocated education not only as a means of economic advancement, but also to aid in establishing racial unity. According to her assistant, Frances Keyser, Matthews, a teacher and a writer, sought "to impart to a group of intelligent young men and women the knowledge of the work and worth of the men and women of their race--a knowledge with which she was completely saturated. Thus she hoped to inspire in them confidence in their group and in themselves--confidence and a hope that she believed would incite them to noble thoughts and great ideas and deeds."[33]

Similarly, Mary Shadd Cary, who had the advantage of writing in both time periods, believed that job skills were the most important tools a black youth could possess. At the end of the war, Cary moved to the United States from Canada and became a contributor to Douglass' *Era*. One of her *Era* editorials reproved all Americans for ignoring the plight of black youth. Through education, she reasoned, blacks could ensure individual advancement by learning a trade and being frugal in their spending habits, while establishing a stable financial reputation. She concluded:

> The condition of colored youth in this city [Washington, D.C.] and District is true of them throughout the country. But the opposition by Americans is not the only cause of this sorry state of things, though mainly so; indifference on the part of leading colored men and the deathlike silence of colored women contribute to it. A people whose leaders seek to learn the torturous ways of speculation and whose women are awed into silence, vital questions must for the time take back seats among the people. The white men of this and other countries deal vigorously now with every issue for the good of their youth, and white women are to the front with them in the work as having a common mission.. . .Our women must speak out. The boys must have trades. . . .White women are getting to be a power in the land, and colored cannot any longer afford to be neutrals.[34]

Moral Elevation

While black journalists concerned themselves with the physical well-being of their race, they also advocated a solid moral and religious background. Editorials stressed the importance of high social standing and good moral character in establishing a respectable position in the community. Also geared toward strengthing family ties, many of these editorials were aimed at women and children. The children were considered to be the hope of the future of the race, while women were expected to influence the moral development of black men, as well as the children. What better way to emphasize this point than through the writings of a black woman.

Following in the tradition of black male leaders of the 1820s and 1830s, many black women journalists spoke against the evils of drink and gambling, as well as infidelity. Not only did these activities hinder the advancement opportunities of the individuals, it also damaged the reputation of blacks as a whole. The women writers and black leaders feared that whites would observe these less desirable activities and judge the progress of the race on generalities based on the actions of a few. Involvement in temperance activities were common among the women writers. Susan Paul was a staunch opponent of intemperance, and she often encouraged her readers, particularly males, to take the "cold water pledge."[35] Cary pointed out the detriments of alcohol on both the physical and moral existence of blacks, in addition to its tendency to cause drinkers to commit crimes. Cary recommended perseverance and hard work, rather than drinking, for those who "have their own way to make in the world."[36] Stewart attributed much of the problems of racial discrimination against blacks to the conduct of black males who were prone to indulge in alcohol, gambling, and dancing. She urged the men, particularly the youth, to avoid such endeavors and to save their hard-earned wages for supporting their families and preparing for the future.

Many stressed the importance of motherhood as the center of a strong family structure, also a significant part of racial survival. Bibb pointed out that children maintained unwavering confidence in their parents, and parents would be wise to "reciprocate the confidence of their children" and live up to their children's expectations.[37]

After the war, Mrs. N.F. Mossell, editor of the woman's department of T. Thomas Fortune's *The Freeman*, supported this attitude toward the responsibilities inherent in "true womanhood." Wives and mothers were expected to show fierce tenacity in guiding their husbands and children into a meaningful and successful existence. Mossell maintained that the work of black women was equal to, if not greater than, the importance of the work of black men because "[u]pon them more than upon any other influence depends the development of a race of men in every respect different from those of us now upon the stage of activity."[38]

At the heart of most messages from the women was the strong sense of religious values. For nineteenth-century blacks, the three institutions of influence in their lives were the church, the school, and the newspaper. The church and the religious doctrines promoted within its walls dictated the ways in which many of blacks' activities were conducted. Religion provided solace in times of adversity and tragedy and guidance in times of indecision. Douglass' religious writings offered solace to those who were heavy of heart, prophesying that religious faith would bring an end to slavery and discrimination.[39] Stewart, whose messages were always presented with religious fervor, provided inspiration through sharp words and admonitions to defy temptations.[40] Like Douglass, Stewart promoted the idea that through faith in God blacks would attain far greater achievements than ever imagined. Bibb declared that no man would ever regret avoiding temptation and sin and experiencing joy over saving himself "from the path of shame."[41]

Paul chose to emphasize the importance of religious lessons for children so that they might grow up as individuals worthy of the respect of all races. She often used stories about her own students to serve as examples of how children should practice religious values.[42] Douglass also contributed items directed specifically toward children, usually in the form of parables, which conveyed simple messages that supported God's teachings.[43]

Many black journalists pointed out the need for these moral and religious convictions with the help of fictional stories, poems, and parables. After the war, these originally took the form of short stories in the newspapers and magazines, eventually being expanded into full-length books. These books and stories taught a lesson that could never be fully expressed in a basic news article. Amelia E. Johnson expressed the importance of high moral standards for both men and women in two novels, as well as in various short stories in newspapers which included *The Joy* (her own short-lived monthly paper), the *Baltimore Baptist*, and Philadelphia's *National Baptist* -- such as her stories *Clarence and Corinne; or, God's Way*, and *The Hazeley Family*.[44] In both works, Johnson emphasizes how family relationships can serve as protection against irresponsibility and moral waste.

Political Activism/Civil Rights

Having enjoyed few, if any, legal or societal rights, black women could empathize with protestors who stressed the need for competent leadership and a strong political voice to champion the causes of the race. Therefore, in both their professional and personal lives black women editors and reporters took part in a variety of political and civic-minded activities, while encouraging other blacks, particularly women, to do likewise. In this way, they reasoned, blacks could assume a larger role in the decision-making process that directed their lives.

Before the war, black women abolitionists' use of a public forum demonstrated a willingness to defy tradition and challenge societal expectations based on race and gender. They protested against segregation in all its forms. As members of antislavery societies, they petitioned against slavery, discrimination on public transportation, and public school segregation. All the women were active participants in the antislavery movement, contributing essays, lecturing, organizing fund-raisers and concerts, and coordinating petition campaigns. Cary protested vehemently against slavery and encouraged emigration to Canada as a means of acquiring full citizenship, something she did not believe possible for blacks who remained in the United States.[45] Douglass, who opposed emigration of any kind, felt that it was God's will for blacks to remain in the country, in which racial equality would eventually be realized because full citizenship rights in the United States was God's gift to his chosen children.[46]

Bibb pointed out the foibles of many church members in helping to maintain the system of slavery, enumerating how many slaves the members of various religious organizations owned.[47] Likewise, Douglass expressed her disdain for a Quaker practice of encouraging blacks to join the church, but requiring them to sit on a bench apart from the rest of the congregation during meetings.[48]

Paul and her family, as did Cary, often criticized the organizational structure of the education system for blacks. Both protested that blacks would suffer from a system in which only blacks participated, and Cary added that segregated schools only perpetuated ignorance about the two races and helped maintain a sense of fear. They also emphasized that black schools funded only by black residents were too often ill-equipped to provide an adequate for the students.[49]

Similarly, discriminatory practices in transportation forced blacks to endure substandard accommodations or to find other means by which to travel. These discriminatory practices indirectly contributed to Paul's early death because of rules that required blacks to stay on the lower deck of a steamboat, even in winter, rather than to share the ladies' cabin with white women.[50]

By comparison, black women after the war were more politically inclined, particularly regarding blacks' voting rights. They saw the enfranchisement of blacks as an opportunity for *all* blacks, and not only for black men. Many black journalists, both male and female, participated in freedmen conventions and meetings held throughout the South to discuss the political future of the Southern states and the newly freed blacks. The writer of an editorial from a Georgia newspaper about one such meeting in South Carolina summed up the political dilemma when black men and women determined that the rights described in the Constitution applied to all citizens in the United States. The writer declared that all blacks should ask

> . . .for the establishment of law and order; the securing of life and property; and freedom to sell labor as a merchant to dispose of any of his commodities; for a fair and impartial construction of the pledges of the government on the land question, that the school, the pulpit and the press be as secure in that State as in Massachusetts, that equal suffrage be conferred in common with white men as a protection from hostility by their known faithfulness to their country's flag during the rebellion and because all free governments derive their power from the consent of the governed. . .[51]

Each of these items found its way into the pages of the black journals after the war. In the October 24, 1872, of the *New National Era*, black female correspondent Mary Olney Brown stated that the Fifteenth Amendment enfranchised women:

> The right of citizens to vote shall not be denied on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude. . . . It does not say, "the right of male citizens to vote," &c., but says "citizens." . . .It is a gross injustice that the colored women have so long been defrauded of their right to vote.

Brown was only one of many black women journalists or part-time correspondents who voiced the discontent of black men and women after the war. Black newspapers also became a forum of protest for Ida B. Wells-Barnett, known as the "Princess of the Press" and probably the best-known black woman reporter of the times. Wells-Barnett was described by writer Norman Woods as "a modern Deborah," who was dedicated to "pleading as only she can plead for justice and fair treatment to be given her long-suffering and unhappy people."[52] She stressed that journalism was "my first, and might be said, my only love,"[53] and established her reputation as a hard-hitting journalist in such areas as civil rights, suffrage, and women's rights.

However, Wells-Barnett is probably most remembered for her vehement campaign against lynchings. Black and white readers in Memphis were well-acquainted with her series of articles which attacked local officials for their inactivity regarding the lynchings of black men falsely accused of raping white women. Her Memphis newspaper, the *Free Speech and Headlight*, was eventually destroyed on May 27, 1892, when a mob of local white men forced their way into the building, smashing equipment and supplies. Wells-Barnett reasoned that a particularly strong editorial had "furnished at last the excuse for doing what the white leaders of Memphis had long been wanting to do: put an end to the *Free Speech*."[54] The editorial read, in part:

> Eight Negroes lynched since last issue of the *Free Speech*...Nobody in this section believes the old thread-bare lie that Negro men assault white women. If Southern white men are not careful they will over-reach themselves and a conclusion will be reached which will be very damaging to the moral reputation of their women.[55]

In response, an editorial appeared the following Monday in the Memphis *Commercial Appeal*. It demanded that the "black wretch who had written that foul lie should be tied to a stake at the corner of Main and Madison streets, a pair of tailor's shears used on him and he should be burned at a stake."[56] Upon the advice of her friends, Wells-Barnett never returned to her Memphis paper, instead taking a job as a writer with T. Thomas Fortune's *New York Age*. However, she continued to lecture on the subject in various towns throughout New England. In October of 1892, black women in Brooklyn and New York staged a fund-raising drive in order to reprint her *Free Speech* articles in pamphlet form, *Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in all Phases*. After a few minor changes and some supplemental evidence, Wells-Barnett also had the pamphlet reprinted in London under the title, *U.S. Atrocities*. In it, she chastised white-owned newspapers for failing to speak out against these atrocities being inflicted upon black men and urged readers to support those newspapers that were willing to risk public outrage by printing the truth about lynchings. She wrote:

> The Afro-American papers are the only ones which will print the truth, and they lack means to employ agents and detectives to get at the facts. The race must rally a mighty host to the support of their journals, and thus enable them to do much in the way of investigation.[57]

Racial Cohesiveness and Equality

Black men encouraged black women to participate in community activities, although some men feared that their participation might take them away from their designated duties within the home. Black women organized black intellectual societies aimed particularly at allowing black women to express themselves freely, such as the one in which Sarah Mapps Douglass debuted as a writer for the *Liberator*. These organizations provided women with the opportunity to share their knowledge and to express their concerns about their communities and their race.

The women also stressed participation in church and church-sponsored activities. Stewart was particularly outspoken in chastising black males for often avoiding the church and abandoning its teachings, and she implored women to assume the responsibility of promoting racial improvement and cultivate "a spirit of Christian love and unity."[58] Stewart beseeched all women to work together for a common cause, be it the abolition of slavery or religious salvation.

The idea of fair treatment for all Americans extended to such simple requests as adequate shelter at railroad stations. A vehement *Era* article by correspondent Faith Lichen was aimed directly toward the nation's white population. In it, she theorized that readers who had not experienced many of the humiliations inflicted upon blacks could not possibly understand the black dilemma. She stated:

> Reader, were you ever a colored boy? Have you ever gone to school with your heart thumping *tramp, tramp,* the boys are marching, and been obliged to walk around a crowd of white boys because they chose to put themselves right in your path and had it [your heart] leap into your throat by a "cuff the nigger"--yelled into your ears and after doing all that one pair of fists could do against half-a-dozen other pairs, were you unmercifully beaten (two or three policemen passing meanwhile)? . . .Have you ever studied Smith's Geography with a carefully cut card held over that very worst type of the Negro presented in painful contrast to the most perfect of the Caucasian on the opposite page?[59]

Conclusion

The role of black women journalists before the Civil War was multifaceted. In order to satisfy allegiances to race and gender, they were forced to defy societal rules of femininity and take a militant stand against all forms of injustice--whether economic, societal, or physical. In a letter to her family, white abolitionist Abigail Kelley Foster accurately predicted how American society would respond to women who dared to challenge contemporary notions regarding public behavior. She wrote:

> If you have read the Liberators I have sent you, you see what a change is going forward in public sentiment in relation to the rights and duties of women. Those who go in the forefront of this as well as in all other reforms must inevitably bear all manner of censure, scorn, contempt, reproach and still severer persecution.[60]

By attempting to alter society via the schools, the churches, and the press, black women journalists also succeeded in altering stereotypes engendered by slavery. With their words and actions they strove to create a society that reflected truly free status, that prohibited violence against blacks, that encouraged equality among the races, and that accepted blacks into the dominant culture. Because of their courage and eagerness to advance their race, these women set the stage for black women journalists who would seek acceptance after the Civil War. Cary even pointed out that because of her struggles black women would have more opportunities as writers and as editors.[61] Through pen and voice, these black women journalists struggled to create a place for themselves, to shape the lives of their families and communities, and to establish a better lifestyle for future generations.

Philip A. Bell, founder of the New York *Colored American* and the San Francisco *Elevator*, exemplified the outlook of black journalists after the Civil War in this editorial, which stated:

> Nothing 'has been accomplished for the negro during the past four years,' but for what the exigencies of the times imperatively called for and the God-scourged people demanded. We are not content with what you were willing to grant, and what was grudgingly given. . .[62]

Not content with what was taking place as a result of the end of the Civil War, black women journalists assumed the role of reformer and representative for a race that as yet had not learned to speak for itself. Having addressed the issues of political activism, personal improvement, moral elevation, and racial equality for free blacks and former slaves prior to the war, these women were faced with the task of promoting these issues for the good of an even greater number of blacks who were experiencing a sense of true freedom for the first time -- not only for blacks in general, but also for women who had never been given the opportunity to speak. Their introduction into the newsroom brought with it a view of black life from a different perspective and hinted at the next phase of development the black press would undergo after the turn of the century.

NOTES

[1] Lucy Wilmot Smith, *The (Indianapolis) Freeman*, February 23, 1889.

[2] Richard V. Cook, *An Address Upon the Education and Influence of Woman. Delivered Before the Sabbath School Union, at the Lutheran Church, in Columbus, January 11, 1858* (Columbus, Texas: By the author, 1858), 14.

[3] Shirley J. Yee, *Black Women Abolitionists: A Study in Activism, 1828-1860* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1992), 113.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Ibid.

[6] *Liberator*, 17 November 1832.

[7] Yee, *Black Women Abolitionists*, 114.

[8] *Provincial Freeman* (Canada West), 29 March 1856.

[9] Rodger Streitmatter, "African-American Women Journalists and Their Male Editors: A Tradition of Support," *Journalism Quarterly, 70* (Summer 1993): 276-286.

[10] Ibid.

[11] Lucy Wilmot Smith, "Women in Journalism," *The Journalist* (26 January 1889): 4.

[12] I. Garland Penn, *The Afro-American Press and Its Editors* (Springfield, Mass.: Willey and Co., 1891), 490.

[13] Carter Bryan, "Negro Journalism in America Before Emancipation," *Journalism Monographs, 12* (Sept. 1969): 30.

[14] *Provincial Freeman*, 25 March, 1854.

[15] *Liberator*, 28 April 1832.

[16] *Provincial Freeman*, 30 June 1855.

[17] See, for example, Jean Fagan Yellin and Cynthis D. Bond, *The Pen is Ours: A Listing of Writings by and about African-*

American Women before 1910 with Secondary Bibliography to the Present (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[18] *Voice of the Fugitive*, 8 Oct. 1851, 22 Oct. 1851, 19 Nov. 1851.

[19] See, Fagan and Bond.

[20] See, Marilyn Richardson (ed.), *Maria W. Stewart, America's First Black Political Writer* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1987); L.A. Scruggs, *Women of Distinction: Remarkable in Works and Invincible in Character* (Raleigh, NC: By the author, 1893).

[21] See Yee, *Black Women Abolitionists*.

[22] See Cary's *Provincial Freeman*, 25 March 1854.

[23] The women published the following newspapers and journals: Wells-Barnett's *Memphis Free Press and Headlight;* Johnson's *The Joy;* Coston's *Ringwood's Journal;* and Ridley's and Ruffin's *Woman's Era*.

[24] *Liberator*, 4 Aug. 1832.

[25] *Liberator*, 27 April 1833.

[26] *Freedom's Journal*, March 16, 1827.

[27] See Bernell Tripp, *Origins of the Black Press, 1827-1847* (Northport, AL: Vision Press, 1992); Frankie Hutton, *The Early Black Press in America, 1827 to 1860* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993).

[28] *Liberator*, 27 April 1833; *Colored American*, 2 Dec. 1837.

[29] *Weekly Anglo-African*, 23 July 1859.

[30] Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society Minutes, 1833-1848, Sept. 29, 1836, and April 19, 1841, Pennsylvania Abolition Society Papers, Philadelphia Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

[31] Extensive details of the controversy between Cary and Bibb can be found in: Jim Bearden and Linda Jean Butler, *Shadd: The Life and Times of Mary Ann Shadd Cary* (Toronto: N.C. Press, Ltd., 1977).

[32] *New National Era*, 28 August 1873.

[33] Frances R. Keyser, "Victoria Earle Matthews, 1861-1898," in *Homespun Heroines and Other Women of Distinction*. Edited by Hallie Q. Brown (Xenia, Ohio: The Aldine Publishing Company, 1926), pp. 215-216. Keyser served as assistant superintendent at Matthews' White Rose Home, established to provide young black girls with food, shelter, and work training.

[34] *New National Era*, March 21, 1872.

[35] *Liberator*, 13 April 1833.

[36] *Provincial Freeman*, 12 August 1854.

[37] *Voice of the Fugitive*, 16 July 1851.

[38] *The Freeman*, April 10, 1886. For this recurring theme, see also Mossell's book, *The Work of the Afro-American Woman* (Xenia, Ohio: n.p., 1894).

[39] *Liberator*, 8 Sept. 1832.

[40] *Liberator*, 28 April 1832.

[41] *Voice of the Fugitive*, 13 August 1851.

[42] *Liberator*, 15 Feb. 1834.

[43] *Liberator*, 18 August 1832.

[44] Amelia E. Johnson, *Clarence and Corinne; or God's Way* (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1890); *The Hazeley Family* (Philadelphia: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1894).

[45] *Provincial Freeman*, 20 May 1854.

[46] *Liberator*, 18 Aug. 1832.

[47] *Voice of the Fugitive*, 22 Oct. 1851.

[48] Sarah Mapps Douglass, Philadelphia, Pa., to William Basset. Reprinted in Gilbert H. Barnes and Dwight L. Dumond (eds.), *Letters of Theodore Dwight Weld, Angelina Grimke Weld, and Sarah Grimke, 1822-1844, Vol. II* (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, 1934), 480.

[49] *The Abolitionist*, Aug. 1833; Bearden and Butler.

[50] Sarah H. Southwick, *Reminiscences of Early Anti-Slavery Days* (Cambridge, MA: n.p., 1893), 29.

[51] *The (Augusta, Ga.) Colored American*, 6 January 1866.

[52] Norman B. Woods, *The White Side of a Black Subject* (Chicago: American Publishing House, 1897), pp. 381-382.

[53] Ida B. Wells, *The Crusade for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p. 242. Ida B. Wells-Barnett began writing this autobiography in 1928, which she failed to complete before her death on March 25, 1931. The chapters she wrote, including the incomplete final statement of the autobiography, were edited by her daughter, Alfreda M. Barnett Duster.

[54] Ibid, pp. 65-66.

[55] *Free Speech*, May 21, 1892

[56] *Commercial Appeal*, May 25, 1892.

[57] Ida B. Wells, *U.S. Atrocities* (London: n.p., 1892), pp. 11-19.

[58] *Liberator*, 28 April 1832.

[59] Ibid, January 25, 1872.

[60] July 7, 1837, Boston, Mass., Abigail Kelley Foster Papers, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, Mass.

[61] *Provincial Freeman*, 30 June 1855.

[62] *Elevator*, May 5, 1865.

Inventing an Indian Icon:
How the Press Made Sense of Sitting Bull

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Abstract

Inventing an Indian Icon:
How the Press Made Sense of Sitting Bull

As one of the most famous Indians of the nineteenth century, Sitting Bull was known largely through newspaper representations. This study examines Sitting Bull's popular identity at three important moments: (1) the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876, (2) the "living exhibit" tours of 1884-85, and (3) his murder in 1890. At each point, the press identified Sitting Bull by his perceived "savage" characteristics and measured him and his tribe against an ideology of progressive civilization. After the victory over Custer, Sitting Bull and the Sioux were portrayed as the most cruel and corrupt of Indian savages. This image softened as Sitting Bull's power declined. On tour with Buffalo Bill in the East and Midwest, Sitting Bull was portrayed as a harmless relic of the old West, hopelessly unsophisticated and out of touch with modern life. Yet when his perceived power returned in the Ghost Dance hysteria of 1890, Sitting Bull's "bad" Indian stereotype re-appeared. After his murder, newspapers again reduced his life to a list of negative qualities and reinforced the idea that "savage" Indians had no place in a progressive America.

INVENTING AN INDIAN ICON: HOW THE PRESS MADE SENSE OF SITTING BULL

Sitting Bull was one of the most famous Native Americans who ever lived, a fierce, determined Lakota leader who defended his people against the invasion of the northern plains and the destruction of Lakota life. But Sitting Bull was known in his lifetime largely through newspaper representations, ideas and images that largely obscured the character, accomplishments and failings of the man himself, creating a native identity that owed more to rumor, racial ideology and expansionist myth-making than to truth or historical fact. Was Sitting Bull "an extremely savage type, betraying that bloodthirstiness and brutality for which he has so long been notorious," as the New York *Times* reported after the Battle of the Little Bighorn?[1] Or was he a more peaceful man, fighting only when provoked, as the Chicago *Times* reported in 1877? "I do not want to go to war with anybody," Sitting Bull told the newspaper.[2] Or perhaps Sitting Bull was simply a con artist, an undistinguished warrior willing to play the great chief for Buffalo Bill's Wild West show in 1885. That image turned up in the Boston *Evening Transcript* after Sitting Bull's death.[3] The contradictions, confusions and outright lies that surround Sitting Bull reveal the active part the press played in forming his public personality during his lifetime and after his death. And it is that Sitting Bull—the man imagined and created in the press—who became an Indian icon.

Sitting Bull's personality and life as a Lakota leader was the subject of irregular press attention from 1871 until his death in 1890. But Sitting Bull attracted great press attention at three times in his life: the Battle of the Little Bighorn in 1876, on tour as a "living exhibit" in 1884 and 1885, and at his arrest and murder in 1890. These incidents gave the press an opportunity to construct competing newspaper versions of Sitting Bull to meet the needs of each moment. This pattern of conflicting public identities repeated the long-standing ambivalence toward Indians in the popular press. Hostile Indians (such as Sitting Bull's Sioux) were identified in ways that emphasized their "natural" barbarity, while friendly or non-threatening Indians were imagined as people who needed education and civilization to make them "normal." In short, the shifts in the language, themes and meanings attached to Sitting Bull at each of these moments reveal the powerful racial assumptions at work in the press as it attempted to make sense of Indians in the final decades of the nineteenth century.

One of the continuing features of Indian news during these years was its fundamental lack of understanding of native people and their cultures.[4] Despite the growing number of reporters in the West following the Civil War, most writers knew little about native life and saw Indians as strange, mysterious and often dangerous people. Newspaper images of Indians in the nineteenth century were shaped by several compelling ideological forces, including the assumption of racial superiority by European Americans and the vision of a progressive, technologically advanced American empire. From the perspective of the individual reporter covering the Indian wars and the closing of the frontier, Indians remained backward people, members of societies far down the evolutionary ladder. According to popular ideas of American social progress, humans had evolved from savagery to civilization and the beliefs and behavior of Native Americans showed that they were closer to savagery than to civilization.[5] No wonder, then, that Sitting Bull was the subject of erroneous and negative news—he was a leading savage whose untamed ways and violent tendencies challenged the underlying ideology of economic and social progress.

For Sitting Bull—a "bad" chief known for his hostility to whites and their ways—a fair or balanced presentation in the papers was probably impossible. Yet the coverage of Sitting Bull and the Sioux can be seen as an important measure of the ways the press understood "savage" Indians and made sense of Indian life in the last half of the century. This analysis includes important Eastern urban newspapers as well as some Western and Midwestern papers that followed Sitting Bull's life. What emerges from these sources is a highly divided and oversimplified portrait of the man, an identity driven by public perceptions of his "best" and "worst" native qualities. At both extremes, Sitting Bull was "produced" by his differences with the dominant culture. Sitting Bull was a man of some skill and courage, the papers reported, but he was most prominently a powerful Sioux warrior assumed to be naturally and fundamentally hostile to important American values.

Sitting Bull and Lakota Culture

Sitting Bull was born in the early 1830s on the Missouri River.[6] His family was a distinguished member of the Hunkpapas, a small band within the Lakota confederacy on the northern plains. Although his original name was Jumping Badger, he was known as a child for "his willful and deliberate ways [which] earned him the nickname Hunkesni, or 'Slow'."[7] At ten, Slow killed his first buffalo, gaining status within the tribe as a hunter. Many years later, Sitting Bull told a reporter that he specialized in buffalo calves and gave the calves to the poor. "[G]iving away the fruits of his hunts foreshadowed one of Slow's most pronounced traits—generosity," biographer Robert Utley concluded.[8]

Slow's first success as a warrior came at fourteen, when he counted his first coup in a raid against the Crows. This honor earned him his father's name, Sitting Bull, an animal known to sit on its haunches when attacked and fight to the death. Throughout his teenage years, Sitting Bull continued to distinguish himself as a warrior, proving himself a brave and skilled fighter in what Utley describes as "one of the world's most highly developed warrior societies."[9]

Sitting Bull also become known among the Hunkpapas as a holy man, achieving distinction as a healer, singer and composer. His tribe also considered him a prophet. When he pointed his pipe to the four winds as part of the pipe ceremony, his nephew One Bull said, Sitting Bull "could foretell anything."[10] Sitting Bull was humble both in dress and deportment, making no effort to indicate his status within the tribe. Utley also notes that Sitting Bull possessed "none of the arrogance or insolence that some chiefs assumed."[11]

The Sitting Bull that emerges from Utley's research is a remarkable individual, "the Hunkpapa incarnate, epitome of the four cardinal virtues of bravery, fortitude, generosity, and wisdom."[12] But Utley wonders if this portrait is too good, a likeness from the point of view of his family and devoted friends. The evidence might be slanted in Sitting Bull's favor, Utley writes, but not enough to alter the reality of the man's achievements. Sitting Bull emerges, Utley concludes, "as a towering figure in his or any other culture."[13]

To his own people, the people who knew him best and understood his life, Sitting Bull was a complex and powerful man. Utley highlights three distinct personalities: warrior and huntsman, holy man, good tribesman. But this is a historian's portrait, painstakingly developed after years of reading and research. Such a portrait of Sitting Bull was not possible in nineteenth century white America and certainly not in the newspapers.

Sitting Bull as Custer's Killer

Sitting Bull became known in the press as a hostile Sioux chief as early as 1871.But he was not the most famous or feared plains Indian of the early 1870s—that distinction probably goes to Red Cloud[14] —nor was he vilified for his leadership, military prowess or cruelty. Even in early 1876, as Custer, Crook and Terry mounted their new campaign against the northern tribes, Sitting Bull was not usually the subject of great attention. The Bismarck *Tribune*, for example, carried many reports of the Indian campaign in early 1876, most of which did not even mention the Sioux, referring simply to "Indians." The *Tribune's* Mark Kellogg, the only newsman to follow Custer and die at the Little Bighorn, published several long letters from the campaign in May and June, none of which mentioned Sitting Bull.[15] The expansionist, rabidly anti-Indian New York *Herald*, however, was more precise, identifying both Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse as objects of the army's summer campaign.[16]

The sensational victory over Custer and the Seventh Cavalry changed Sitting Bull's status forever: he became a major symbol of native savagery and resistance. Sitting Bull became "the Indian outlaw Sitting Bull,"[17] chief organizer of the "red devils"[18] who "caught [Custer] in an ambuscade"[19] and had proven himself "the equal of the great Indian fighter, Crook."[20] Indeed, Sitting Bull soon took on near-mythic qualities, an explanatory frame that helped the press and public understand his seemingly impossible victory over the gallant Custer. "His Education French, and His 'Idees' Napoleonic," explained a Chicago *Tribune* headline three weeks after the battle. The *Tribune's* James William Howard (writing as "Phocion"), reported that Sitting Bull had been taught French by Father De Smet, a Jesuit priest. Howard also referred to a steamboat captain named McGarry who "says he knows that Sitting Bull has read the French history of Napoleon's wars, and [McGarry] believes that he modeled his generalship after the little Corsican Corporal."[21] Other reports circulated that Sitting Bull was really white, a Sandwich Islander, and that he had graduated from West Point.[22] Still other stories claimed that whites in the Indian camp directed the victory.[23] So fantastic was the Indian victory over Custer that details of Sitting Bull's life—and his race—had to be invented by the press (and others) in order to be understood by the public.

The truth, of course, was very different. Sitting Bull did not read French, did not know Napoleon's tactics, was not a general and had not killed Custer. He did not even fight in the major actions of the battle, leaving that task to younger men and, at forty-five, assuming his role as a protector of the women and children.[24] Nevertheless, Sitting Bull had been a forceful presence at the Little Bighorn. He provided, as Utley put it, "a leadership so wise and powerful that it drew and held together a muscular coalition of tribes, one so infused with his defiant cast of mind that it could rout Three Stars [Gen. George Crook at the Battle of Rosebud Creek] and annihilate Long Hair."[25]

Custer's killer—this was the Sitting Bull the public wanted and the press provided. Following the Little Bighorn, Sitting Bull was demonized at the most dangerous Indian on the northern plains. It was the first, the most hostile, and the most enduring of Sitting Bull's public identities. One major source of error and vitriol was the New York *Herald*, a Democratic-leaning paper then under the leadership of James Gordon Bennett, Jr. The *Herald* had been long been an expansionist journal and the elder Bennett was a prominent Custer supporter during the Civil War.[26] Thus Custer's demise was a natural and symbolically powerful weapon to use against President Grant and his Indian policies. Even before the Little Bighorn, when news of Rosebud Creek broke, the *Herald* criticized Grant and praised "that superb Indian fighter Custer." Had Grant put Custer in the field earlier, the paper said about Rosebud Creek, "we should not now be mourning ten dead and twenty wounded soldiers."[27] As for Sitting Bull, the paper was unrelentingly negative. For example, the *Herald* used a collection of Sitting Bull's autobiographical drawings, completed at Fort Buford in 1870, as direct evidence of Sioux cruelty. These drawings, fifty-five in all, showed the "notable and praiseworthy deeds" of Sitting Bull's life, the paper said. The *Herald* continued:

> Whether it be the scalping of a soldier in battle, the killing of a Crow squaw, counting "coup" upon an adversary, that is striking him, killing and scalping a white woodchopper, lancing a Crow Indian, or the sly theft of a mule, he brags equally of his prowess in his curious autobiography.[28]

The paper supported its claims by publishing a two-column engraving based on a Sitting Bull sketch. It showed Sitting Bull and another warrior on horseback attacking an armed soldier. The *Herald* explained, "This sketch has been selected as it is the most representative in the series and as best illustrating the history which Sitting Bull narrates in his rude and primeval way."[29] The same issue included a bitter editorial that made clear the *Herald*'s interpretation of Sitting Bull's drawings. Each drawing recounts "some deed of bloodshed, cruelty, theft or inhumanity," the paper noted. Together, the drawings "make up the life of the model savage, whom our philanthropists love to feed, the child of nature whom the Indian Ring is never weary of praising or swindling." For savages such as Sitting Bull, "everything that is cruel and vicious is a matter of ostentation and pride."

The *Herald* also made much of the violence in Sitting Bull's drawings. "No record is made of the kindly or of the good; it is only the base or the brutal that they think worthy of telling." Turning to Indians generally, the editorial concluded with a reference to the old "vices and virtues" idea—that native virtues disappeared when confronted with the vices of civilization—and the gospel of hard work:

> There is no room here for discussing whether the rough-shod march of our civilization has not made a race of simple savages a race of savage demons; but we do know that in numberless instances they have opposed a stolid score to efforts at their advancement, and, rejecting the ways of civilization, have turned again and again to the wild, rather than, as General Sherman said the other day at West Point, "earn their bread by the sweat of their brow."[30]

In the *Herald*, at least, Sitting Bull was the chief murderer of a murderous, obstinate and lazy race, people so depraved and alien they might require extermination.

What stands out about the *Herald's* image of Sitting Bull is its racial determinism. As a "model savage," Sitting Bull was naturally violent and depraved; as his drawings showed, he was actually proud of his barbarity. In addition, the *Herald* emphasized the fact that the Sioux had steadfastly rejected the gift of American progress and the gospel of hard work; these were savage people incapable of recognizing or appreciating the benefits of a civilized life. Finally, the *Herald* did its best to link Sitting Bull to other disruptive elements in American society (such as French Catholics who taught him Napoleonic tactics) and to radical Republican philanthropists (such as Wendell Phillips who protected him and his tribe).[31] By making such connections, Bennett presented Custer's Last Stand as a major symbol in the ideological war between civilized and savage forces in American life. Custer, of course, was the heroic defender of civilization; his demise could be blamed first on Sitting Bull's Sioux and then on the incompetence of Grant, the corrupt Indian Ring and soft-hearted Republicans.

In the *Herald*, these were not the only "savages" that threatened Bennett's version of American progress. As Richard Slotkin has pointed out, the *Herald* also had other enemies in mind, especially the working classes and former slaves then threatening the dominance of capitalists like Bennett. Thus Indians, African Americans, radicals, Catholics, foreigners, and lower-class whites were all connected in the *Herald's* rehash of Custer and the Little Bighorn, so much so that Sitting Bull's persona became a part of the paper's on-going explanation of election year issues. Less than a month after the Little Bighorn, for example, the *Herald* commented on a racial conflict in South Carolina by referring to Sitting Bull's supposed satisfaction at the spread of "Sioux Civilization" in the South, where poor whites and blacks were adopting savage ways.[32] Thanks to the Indian triumph over Custer, Sitting Bull's public identity could be transformed into a potent metaphor for a host of threats to the New York *Herald's* self-serving view American social peace and economic progress.

Ironically, the first news reports of Custer's defeat were not linked to Sitting Bull.[33] By the next day, however, Sitting Bull became part of the growing sensation that became "Custer's Last Stand." In the *Times*, Custer's killers were now identified as "Sitting Bull's force" and their village was "Sitting Bull's main camp."[34] Another second-day story in the *Times* contrasted the "wild Sioux" of the plains with Southern Indians, calling the Sioux "a distinct race of men...." The *Times* continued:

> The Sioux live by the chase and feed chiefly upon flesh. The Southern Indians are farmers and eat fruits and vegetables, the latter are at their worst cruel, cowardly robbers. The former are as much like the brave and war-like red men represented by the *Last of the Mohicans* as ever existed outside the covers of fiction and romance. The difference between the foes in the North and South-west seems not to have been well counted upon.... [35]

This paragraph demonstrates one way the press made sense of Indians beyond the "bad" Indian stereotype. Not all Indians were alike; some Southern tribes were merely "cruel" and "cowardly." The Sioux, however, were true savages. Custer should have made this distinction, the *Times* noted. Instead, "he foolishly attempted to cut his way through and punish the red devils." The *Times* was a moderate Republican paper, much less inflammatory than the Democratic *Herald* and other anti-Grant journals, and willing to criticize Custer. But even the *Times* recognized that Sioux savagery had to be stopped.

Sitting Bull's notoriety grew quickly after the Little Bighorn and the papers scrambled for information about the mysterious chief. The New York *Times* featured an interview with J. D. Keller, a former clerk at Standing Rock who had known Sitting Bull. Predictably, the report emphasized Sitting Bull's "savage" qualities and, in the words of a subhead, the "peculiarities of [the Sioux] tribe when on the war path."[36] Keller described Sitting Bull as five feet tall with a large head, eyes and nose. "His countenance is of an extremely savage type, betraying that bloodthirstiness and brutality for which he has been so long notorious," the story continued. The people of Montana were well aware of Sitting Bull and his "ferocious nature, some of his worst deeds having been perpetuated in that Territory." The story ended with Keller's erroneous speculation about how the Sioux managed to trick the Seventh Cavalry:

> My idea of the Custer slaughter is that the Indians had no women and children in their lodges, and had parapets dug under the lodges out of sight. Custer, thinking it was a family camp, rushed in the centre of their fort, where resistance would necessarily prove fatal.[37]

This story, complete with its biases and errors, emphasizes again the narrow role to which Sitting Bull was assigned after the Little Bighorn. As the leader of the notorious Sioux and the man blamed for killing Custer, Sitting Bull was portrayed as *naturally* savage and evil. Thus he was described as "an extremely savage type" with a "ferocious nature," a characteristic of the "hostile Sioux."

Not surprisingly, the savagery of the plains Indians and the need for retribution was a popular theme in the Western press following the Little Bighorn. The Bismarck *Tribune* ran headlines emphasizing the seriousness of the cause: "NOW IT'S BUSINESS, NO MORE FOOLISHNESS."[38] C. A. Lounsberry, the editor of the *Tribune* and an old friend of Custer's, wrote a dramatic editorial on the Indian situation, asking "WHAT WILL BE DONE ABOUT IT?" Lounsberry's answer was, in a word, revenge.

> Let that christian philanthropy which weeps over the death of a lazy, lousy, lying and stealing red skin, whose hands are still reeking with the blood of defenceless women and children, slain on the frontier, and who are ever ready to apologize for these murderers, take a back seat. Invite the soldier to the front and sustain him while he causes the Indians to realize the power, and those that still live to respect the white man. Wipe out all treaties, rub out all agencies and reservations, and treat the Indians as they are, criminals and paupers.[39]

This sweeping indictment of Indians represented the anger felt by many whites, East and West, in response to Custer's defeat. It was also a personal response for Lounsberry, a Michigan native (like Custer) who had known Custer since the Civil War. In fact, Lounsberry had planned to accompany Custer as a correspondent for his paper and Bennett's New York *Herald*. When a family illness caused his cancellation, the assignment went to his employee, Mark Kellogg. Like the *Herald*, Lounsberry criticized Indians for their laziness, an important sign of their hostility to civilized ways. Lounsberry also named western pioneers as Indian victims—"defenceless women and children"—instead of Custer and his soldiers, a strategy that broadened the charge against the Sioux well beyond the Little Bighorn, where Custer was the aggressor. The only thing these "murderers" and "criminals" will understand, Lounsberry added, is brute force.

Some of the most dramatic rhetoric following Custer's defeat turned up in the press in the form of speeches, poems and satires. A long speech by Jefferson Kidder, Dakota Territory's Congressional representative, took up a full page in the Bismarck *Tribune* three weeks after the battle. Kidder blasted Indian sympathizers for their misplaced "Christian philanthropy," criticized the fictions of Cooper and Longfellow for their "purely imaginary and meretricious" Indian nobility, and singled out the Sioux for "continually murdering innocent men, women and children...."[40]

In August, a satire in the Bismarck *Tribune* claimed to provide "Sitting Bull's True Pedigree." "Gen. S. Bull," the columnist said, was born on "Cow Island" and was named for his habit of "*setting* down on lonesome subjects of the American Republic whenever an Indian agent 'kicked'..." [italics in original]. He measures "standing up, 7 ft. 5 in. or lying down 7 in. 5 ft.," the paper said. He has six fingers on one hand, five on the other. More pointedly, Sitting Bull has

> one leg [that] is a little longer than the other or the other is a little shorter, I forget which—this deformity sorter bothers the military, as it gives him an uncertain warbling gait, and they can't tell whether he is bound for the Big Horn mountains or the British Possessions.[41]

Finally, the satirist, identified as "Bismarck, Jr.", said that the chief had a limited education, but "he can cypher a government contract down as close as a Q. M. [Quartermaster] clerk." In any case, "he don't care whether Uncle Sammy pays off the boys in hard or soft money as the traders take either in pay for war material." This last barb was the most serious, because it emphasized that Sitting Bull was still at war.[42]

Another satirical account of Sitting Bull's life was published in the Minneapolis *Tribune*. This story, allegedly from a schoolmate, told how "we used to give him [Sitting Bull] a truthful little hatchet and butcher knife and the old yellow cat to play with." The writer went on, tongue firmly in cheek:

> I should judge that he must have scalped that old cat as much as sixteen or seventeen hundred times before he was three years old. It was beautifully touching to observe what an interest that child took in dumb animals.[43]

The writer also raised the issue of government handouts, now a familiar complaint against Sitting Bull. Even as a child, the story claimed, Sitting Bull would draw rations and blankets "just in play." This was an ironic charge to make against Sitting Bull, a man who was well known for his hostility to agency life and his independence from the ration system. Nevertheless, this portrait of young Sitting Bull as a cruel and naturally manipulative government dependent fit the ideology of the post-Little Bighorn era; that is, it belittled this "savage" Indian as a petty thief, distinctive for his native dishonesty and cowardice.

Sitting Bull's position as the most infamous hostile Indian was evident a year after the Little Bighorn when the U.S. government organized a peace commission, the so-called "Sitting Bull Commission." This meeting took place at Fort Walsh in Canada's Northwest Territories, where Sitting Bull and his band had fled in May, 1877. One of the reporters who covered the meeting and met Sitting Bull was Charles Sanford Diehl of the Chicago *Times*, a talented reporter destined to become head of the Associated Press. His reports reveal Sitting Bull's new status as a public person. Although the headlines still portrayed the Sioux as hostile, Diehl provided a fair summary of Sitting Bull's position, including the chief's complaint that the Americans had come to capture and kill him. Diehl also provided a more accurate portrait of Sitting Bull himself, taking pains to contradict "all of the twaddle which has been published about him." Sitting Bull was a "pure-blooded savage" who was "splendidly proportioned," Diehl wrote. His almost Roman features, Diehl noted romantically, "heightens his air of intelligence and adds to the almost judicial gravity of his countenance." Diehl added:

> I had heard that Sitting Bull was club-footed, a scholar, a half-breed, a graduate of West Point. He is none of these; he is an untutored savage, and, as Indians go, a very fine-looking and more than usually intelligent one.[44]

This was faint praise, but within the ideology of the day, it was an honest attempt to see beyond the clichés of Sitting Bull's identity and to recognize his merits as a human being and tribal leader.

Diehl went on to provide an account of Sitting Bull's reply to Gen. Terry's demands. This press account provided one of the few opportunities for Sitting Bull and other chiefs to air their grievances publicly. Sitting Bull's speech also gave Diehl a chance to describe the man's power as a speaker. Sitting Bull began in "a sharp, vindictive manner," Diehl wrote. Yet the reporter was impressed:

> As I watched...and saw his mobile face light up as he spoke of the great wrongs [done to] his people, and uttered his contempt and hatred for the American nation, I could not help

> but admire the natural oratory which enabled him to speak so strongly. Every thought was expressed in a gesture more powerful than his words could possibly be framed to read.[45]

Diehl was less impressed with Sitting Bull's stubbornness and his hostility in the negotiations. Still, these first-hand reports provided a fuller and more humane portrait of Sitting Bull than most of the rumor and invective published since the victory over Custer. Ever so slowly, Sitting Bull was beginning to emerge from the demon's role.

Two weeks later, Diehl published an interview with Sitting Bull, a story that demonstrated Sitting Bull's rehabilitated image. The interview appeared under the headline, "THE SIOUX'S SAVIOR."[46] As before, Diehl supplied his readers with details that made Sitting Bull more human. In conversation, Diehl wrote, Sitting Bull "looked at the person addressed fairly in the eye, and when he laughs, he does so heartily, and all the stoicism of the savage is gone." The interview also gave Sitting Bull a chance to deny his identity as a war chief and white-hater. Questioned about returning to the U.S., Sitting Bull said, "I will not start any fight. Every time I have had any trouble with them [the Americans], they struck me first. I want to live in peace." Sitting Bull even denied his role as a chief or as a head soldier, saying that he was once a chief, "but the Americans killed my people and broke up my tribe." Why do the people still look up to him, Diehl asked. "It is because I am poor," Sitting Bull answered, a reply that made sense in Lakota culture but must have struck most readers as disingenuous.

Despite such misunderstandings, Sitting Bull was speaking for himself in the press and Diehl was a perceptive reporter. The result was a more detailed and expansive portrait of Sitting Bull, one certainly more accurate than the stream of errors that followed the Little Bighorn. More than a year after the battle, Sitting Bull had emerged in the press as an intelligent and powerful Sioux leader, one who was still a savage, but now a savage with motives for his actions and some recognizable "good Indian" qualities. Yet it seems unlikely that Diehl's more complex portrait of Sitting Bull changed public opinion to any significant degree. For most of the press and public, Sitting Bull was still Custer's killer, a fierce, war-like leader of the wild and hostile Sioux and a bitter enemy of American civilization. This was not a hard case to make. Sitting Bull was, after all, on the wrong side of the most sensational and disputed Indian battle in American history.

And Sitting Bull was, symbolically at least, Custer's killer and Custer, the self-promoting Civil War hero and golden-haired cavalry officer, was well on his way to becoming the nation's most famous military martyr. All that clouded the public's view of Sitting Bull for years to come.

Sitting Bull Goes to Town

In 1884, eight years after the Battle of the Little Bighorn, Sitting Bull was living at the Standing Rock Agency, farming a bit and at peace. After years of exile in Canada, he had surrendered in 1881, no longer able to find sufficient buffalo or supplies to sustain his people. Moreover, many of his fellow chiefs had already surrendered, leaving Sitting Bull with fewer tribesmen willing or able to resist.[47] Arriving at Fort Buford in July, 1881, Sitting Bull experienced for the first time his new role as an uncertain celebrity, widely vilified but also acclaimed for his victory over Custer. Curious crowds lined up to see the infamous chief and Sitting Bull embarked on a new life, one that included visits to Bismarck, St. Paul, Washington and New York City. These encounters introduced him to the customs and technologies of late nineteenth-century American life. One of the early lessons Sitting Bull learned in his new world was commercial; whites would pay good money for his autograph and personal items. Entrepreneurs also saw profits in Sitting Bull's fame and before long several men, including Buffalo Bill Cody, were interested in Sitting Bull's crowd-drawing abilities.

Sitting Bull's first trip to the city was in March 1884, when Agent James McLaughin took the chief to Minneapolis and St. Paul. There Sitting Bull toured the city's industrial warehouses and factories. He visited the *Pioneer Press*, a school, and the city fire department, where the fireman demonstrated their firefighting skills. The arrival of Sitting Bull in "polite" society gave the press a chance to focus on Sitting Bull as a man, not as a demon, and to contrast Sitting Bull's "Indianness" with mainstream standards. Sitting Bull was almost always found deficient in such comparisons, but the press had no other logical way to make sense of the man than to make these ethnocentric comparisons. In short, reports about Sitting Bull in the city were informal measurements of native life, a catalogue of what it meant to be both civilized and savage. Thus the press showed an extraordinary interest in Sitting Bull's dress, speech, table manners and the like. Such details would not be a newsworthy topic for "normal" citizens in the press, but no newspaper treated Sitting Bull as "normal."

In St. Paul's *Pioneer Press*, for example, Sitting Bull and his nephew One Bull attracted a crowd. "Pushing, jostling, eager, unappeasable, the people crowded into the [hotel] corridors" to see the men "in their picturesque garb...." The *Press* also reported that Sitting Bull had gained weight since his surrender—he was no longer "the thin and ragged warrior"—a comment on Sitting Bull's improved condition as an apparent government ward. Sitting Bull's hosts showed him the city's cultural and technical marvels and the chief was suitably impressed. "The telephone broke him all up," the paper reported. Sitting Bull was also impressed with the city's houses. "Your tepees are very big and very high. I never saw any so big before," he told the paper.[48]

The most remarkable thing about this news account was its lack of rancor. The *Pioneer Press* eliminated all references to Sitting Bull's "savage" characteristics so well publicized in 1876: his "bloodthirstiness," his "ferocious nature" and the like. In fact, the story did not mention either Custer or the Little Bighorn. Eight years after the battle, the *Press* seemed to forgive the old chief. In the city, removed from his dangerous natural habitat, Sitting Bull could be seen as someone trying to move from savagery to civilization. The story itself provided evidence of this transition, noting his wonder at the telephone, his praise of big houses and his comments on farming. A story two days later summarized Sitting Bull's fire station visit, where he was asked what he liked best. "All of it, like everything," he told the paper.[49] In short, the *Press* represented a benign Sitting Bull and implied an optimistic Indian future where native traditions would be replaced by civilized habits and modern technology. After all, if the most hostile chief of the Sioux could be converted, then surely others could be.

But Sitting Bull could not escape the shadow of the Little Bighorn for long. In an editorial on the chief's visit, the *Pioneer Press* denigrated Sitting Bull's leadership and described him as a "plotter," a quality the editor said explained his "reticence in regard to Custer's death." The editorialist continued:

> A white man in fear of death for that deed would sooner or later trip himself, and let fall some clue to his guilt. I hope Sitting Bull on his death-bed, when there can be no fear of earthly punishment before his eyes, will tell all he knows of that fearful and heroic struggle.[50]

In St. Paul, Sitting Bull was still accountable for Custer's death and the *Press* was unwilling to let him come to town without calling attention to this fact.

Back in Bismarck, the *Tribune* remained highly critical of Sitting Bull and his trip to Minnesota. Spring was coming, the paper noted, and "the old chief's thoughts would *naturally* turn toward the war path and new deeds of petty larceny and manslaughter" (emphasis added).[51] When Sitting Bull visited the Franklin school, the *Tribune* mocked Indian education, which "consisted principally in acquiring a dexterity in making successful sneaks on the smoke houses of the intrepid settlers of the Missouri slope." Again, the paper saw this a natural part of Sitting Bull's character: "This wasn't right, but he was so educated and couldn't help it."

The *Tribune's* attack also had a notable moral element; Indian life was portrayed as evil while life of the city offered redemption. Thus Sitting Bull was called an "old impenitent sinner" and the editor hoped that the attractions of the city might "lure the old man from the path of sin and iniquity...."[52] Indeed, the *Tribune* claimed that officials had organized the trip in order to expose Sitting Bull to "a little civilization, hoping that it might wean him from his thirst for the gore of the frontiersman." In contrast to the optimistic *Pioneer Press*, however, the *Tribune* viewed the civilizing effects of the trip as mere folly: "[F]illing his bronze system full of pie and Milwaukee beer," the paper said, might convince the chief to "cheerfully repent of his sins and exchange his classical breech cloth for the pants of the dude and his scalping knife for show tickets."[53] The article ended with the wish that "high living may get the bulge on his untutored stomach and throw him into dyspepsia..., but even that is a slender hope and should not be too fondly cherished."

The tone and language of this characterization reveal a great deal about the popular understanding of Indians in the West in the 1880s. Indians in general and Sitting Bull in particular were usually portrayed as natural savages; thus "petty larceny," "manslaughter," "thirst for gore," "a love for cussedness," and the like were assumed to be inbred in the Indian character, a character so deficient that it cried out for ridicule. This portrait also perpetuated the notion that Sitting Bull and other Indians acted rashly and, even worse, that violence was for them mere sport. Sitting Bull, the paper claimed, "has been royally entertained, and asserts that he hasn't had so much fun since the Custer massacre." Finally, the *Tribune's* bitter attack on Sitting Bull was notable for its lack of explanation or context. Sitting Bull was a leading warrior and had killed many men, both white and native. More famously, he was "Custer's killer," a fact not mentioned but well understood in Bismarck. Yet the *Tribune* argued that this violence was a natural result of the savage life—"he was so educated and couldn't help it"—ignoring more complex cultural or historical explanations for Lakota responses to the invasion of the northern plains. Significantly, too, the paper made no reference to the army, the U.S. government, business interests, or the actions of white speculators in the Dakotas as a way to understand Sitting Bull or his actions. This omission, of course, ignored the major forces in recent Lakota life, forces that could have made Sitting Bull's violence more understandable. In Bismarck, however, Sitting Bull's savagery did not merit serious explanation—he was just evil.

Later in 1884, with the approval of Agent McLaughin, Sitting Bull and several other chiefs and their wives were organized by a showman named Alvaren Allen into "Sitting Bull's Combination." The troupe traveled to New York City in the late summer and appeared at the Eden Musee as a living exhibit of native life from the plains.[54] Newspaper ads in New York built up the appearance as "a great novelty" and "a historically correct picture of frontier life" featuring "no less a personage than the original living and celebrated Sioux Chief SITTING BULL...."[55] The two-week appearance was a huge success, and it gave the New York *Times* a chance to make a its own cultural comparisons. The *Times* began with a comment on native speech and appearance: "Low, guttural sounds emanating from capacious chests signaled the entrance of a singular-looking crowd yesterday noon...." The reporter then listed the English and native names of each of the Indians, taking the opportunity to comment on the strangeness of the Lakota language. Sitting Bull was listed as simply "alias Tatank Iyotonka," but the listing quickly degenerated into ridicule for others in the party when "alias" was replaced by "familiarly known as," "dubbed by the boys," "usually called to dinner by," "rejoices also in the sobriquet," "humorously saluted as," "affectionately called," and "hilariously christened."[56] This string of descriptors was probably amusing to *Times'* readers, but the language also indicates the low status accorded native naming practices.

The *Times* went on to comment on Sitting Bull's manners and appearance. He was a "powerfully built fellow," the paper noted, though when approached by a reporter proved to be "as modest as a maid." The reporter described Sitting Bull's braids in detail, but noted that his unorthodox table manners caused the most sensation. "He used the toothpicks for chopsticks to spear the chicken croquettes, which he mistook for potatoes...," the *Times* reported. Sitting Bull is "reputed to be ignorant of English," though the paper pointed out that he had no trouble understanding the offer of a whiskey cocktail. Like the Bismarck *Tribune*, this account overlooked Sitting Bull's career as a warrior and provided no hint of Custer or other military exploits. Having come to the city as a popular attraction, the *Times* held to that line. Nevertheless, the newspaper's lampooning of Lakota names and its emphasis on bad manners made plain the fact that Sitting Bull and his fellow chiefs were still rude savages, far removed from grace or real civilization.

Sitting Bull's next major encounter with urban America was in 1885, when he signed on for a season with Buffalo's Bill Cody's Wild West show. He was cast as the villain in the show and was often hissed when he appeared.[57] But he was undoubtedly a draw. Newspaper advertisements for the show featured his name prominently—"The Renowned Sioux Chief SITTING BULL"—and, to the chagrin of the Bismarck *Tribune* and like-minded papers, he was often greeted by public officials and other prominent citizens. Sitting Bull was particularly acclaimed in Canada, where he met members of Parliament and "stole the show," according to historian Don Russell.[58] The Wild West show appeared in Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Toronto and Hamilton; everywhere Sitting Bull "was honored by mayors and members of Parliament...," Russell wrote.[59] The Toronto *Globe*, for example, praised the Wild West show without referring to "Indian treachery" or similar terms. The paper treated Sitting Bull respectfully, pointing out his intelligence and pleasant demeanor. The *Globe* highlighted Sitting Bull's generosity—"[T]he old man, as was his custom, invariably fed all the hungry members of his tribe...whenever he had rations."—but criticized this habit as "most unpractical."[60] The *Globe* also emphasized Sitting Bull's loyalty, noting his fast friendships with several white and native Canadians. Based on this report, Toronto readers could reasonably conclude that Sitting Bull was less the threatening savage of Little Bighorn fame than a colorful, if somewhat curious, native leader.

In the U.S., however, Sitting Bull's reception was substantially more ambivalent. The Washington *Post* ran this subhead on its review of the Wild West show: "A Group of Howling Savages Pursue a Defenseless Stage Coach." The review described the mock attack in detail, naming the driver, John Higby, and recounting his efforts to elude the attackers. "Nearer and nearer came the Indians, yelling like mad and exchanging rapid shots with the passengers," the paper said.[61] Suddenly, Buffalo Bill and his men appeared, driving off the Indians. Despite his "star" billing in the ads, Sitting Bull was not named in this story. Instead, *Post* readers caught a glimpse of the West as spectacle, complete with "defenseless" passengers, a daring stage driver, howling savages, and a rescuer named Buffalo Bill. Whatever his real fame as a warrior and chief, Sitting Bull could not be the hero of this tale.

Sitting Bull's more notorious identity was resurrected when the show appeared in Michigan, Custer's home state. A day before the show opened in Detroit, the lead editorial in the *Evening Journal*, "A Shameless Enterprise," introduced the chief as "head butcher of the Sioux."[62] Not coincidentally, Sitting Bull was compared to Henry Wirz, the Confederate commandant of the infamous Andersonville prison who was tried and executed for war crimes by a Union military commission.[63] The editorial also took direct aim at Sitting Bull and the massacre—"not a battle"—at the Little Bighorn:

> Sitting Bull's warfare was characteristic of a bloodthirsty, ferocious, bestial bushwhacker. And the murderous barbarity displayed by him in the ambush where the gallant Custer and his brave comrades lost their lives is his chief claim to the distinction which make it a good speculation to carry him through the country for exhibition.[64]

The paper reminded readers that nine Michigan men died with Custer and that the people of the state could feel only "morbid curiosity" to see Sitting Bull and "be gratified at the sight of his brutish face." Despite this warning, the paper stopped short of directly threatening Sitting Bull and ended with this lukewarm admonition: "Unless the memory of these things [the Little Bighorn] is dead Michigan ought not to be a good state for Sitting Bull to visit."

Two days later, the *Evening Journal* published an interview and another editorial on Sitting Bull. Under a headline identifying him (erroneously) as "ONE OF GEN CUSTER'S MURDERERS," Sitting Bull was described largely in negative terms; he was the "notorious chief" and "noted murderer" but also the "great chieftain." The reporter described Sitting Bull's appearance, his clothes, and jewelry, noting "a very dirty pin" and gold buttons that "yearned for cleaning." But the man's face impressed the Detroit writer; it reminded him of portraits of Daniel Webster. The reporter concluded on an ironic note: "Sitting Bull is one of the finest looking Indians who ever committed murder."[65]

The interview itself included details of Sitting Bull's early life, Indian horsemanship and his travels in Canada. The reporter noticed that Sitting Bull spoke slowly, with great deliberation. "His tones are quiet and unassuming, though he gesticulates a great deal," the reporter wrote. The editorial on the same page was more forceful. Sitting Bull was now "that dirty savage," "the murderer of the heroic Custer" and an "unpunished criminal." The *Journal* criticized those unidentified prominent citizens—including a "once warm friend" of Custer—who "bowed before him as if he were an august potentate instead of a red-handed brute." The lesson here, the *Journal* claimed, was for murderers to make sure their victims were the bravest and best. Such a criminal will then, like Sitting Bull, "cease to become a murderer and become an honored warrior killing for some noble object."[66]

In most of the cities where he appeared, Sitting Bull was an obvious curiosity. The Indian Wars were over, it seemed, and the Wild West battles were strictly for sport. The crowds came out to see Custer's nemesis, now tame enough to play the villain and sell his autograph. In the papers, Sitting Bull was an easy target for ridicule, his manners, speech and dress still distinctly at odds with the fashions of the day. Poking fun at Sitting Bull was good sport too, though the continuing emphasis on differences helped obscure a more complete portrait of the man. But in Detroit, the events of 1876 were still too fresh to make Sitting Bull a neutral figure. He might be a great chief and the object of some misplaced attention, but he was still the man most responsible for the death of Michigan's most honored native son, a fact that could not be easily forgiven. In Michigan, nine years was not enough time to erase Sitting Bull's identity as the most treacherous Indian in the West.

Making Sense of Sitting Bull's Murder

Sitting Bull made the front pages again in late 1890 when, in a response to the Ghost Dance movement then sweeping the northern plains, army officials ordered his arrest. The arrest and murder of Sitting Bull on December 15 was one of the many tragic and unnecessary events associated with the rumored rise of an Indian Messiah and the Ghost Dance, a spiritual movement that promised its believers a native utopia, ripe with buffalo and free from whites. Inspired by a Paiute holy man named Wovoka, the Ghost Dance was a seductive if unrealistic vision, producing a number of true believers among the Lakota as well as a fierce response from government and military officials. The press played a harmful and amplifying role in the perception of the Ghost Dance movement, sensationalizing its dangers and routinely referring to its effects as the "Messiah craze," a "religious craze" or simply "the craze."[67] The Ghost Dance hysteria culminated near Wounded Knee Creek on the Pine Ridge reservation on December 29, when soldiers attempted to disarm a Miniconjous band led by Big Foot. Some of the warriors resisted, believing that their ghost shirts would render them invincible to army bullets. The confrontation quickly escalated into a massacre, leaving Big Foot and scores of women and children dead. Several soldiers were also killed and rumors spread among the tribes and in the press about a new Indian War.[68]

Sitting Bull was not a true believer. But he had been open to some of the Ghost Dance ideas and invited a Minniconjou man named Kicking Bear to Standing Rock to make his case. To Agent McLaughlin and the army, this was an openly provocative act, one the government could not ignore. Although McLaughlin and the army were often at odds over the details, they began planning Sitting Bull's arrest. This action, they hoped, would undermine the Messiah movement and, not coincidentally, muzzle Sitting Bull, whose leadership was always seen as a threat. In the early hours of December 15, some forty Indian policeman surrounded Sitting Bull's cabin and quickly apprehended the sleeping chief. He agreed to go, then hesitated. A crowd gathered, urging resistance and shouting taunts at the police. Suddenly one of Sitting Bull's men fired at a policeman named Bull Head, who, falling, fired at Sitting Bull, hitting him in the chest. The next minutes were chaotic, but when the shooting stopped, Sitting Bull and several others on both sides lay dead.[69]

Sitting Bull's murder gave the papers one more chance to define the man. Unfortunately, Sitting Bull's death became another opportunity to recycle the old clichés and reduce Sitting Bull's life to its most hostile characteristics. In the overheated atmosphere of the Messiah craze, the press relied on "official" sources and the language of difference to make sure Sitting Bull was once again known as Custer's killer.

Sitting Bull's death was big news, even in the East. The New York *Times*, for example, published several page one stories, including one supplied by Agent McLaughlin. The note introducing McLaughlin's report said, "The narrative throws a flood of light on the old chief's wily character..." and McLaughlin reported on his efforts to undermine the disaffected Indians. "Knowing the Indians as I do, I am confident that I can...settle the Messiah craze at this agency, and thus break up the power of Sitting Bull, without trouble and with but little excitement," McLaughlin wrote. This report revealed McLaughlin as far too optimistic, but it also laid the blame for Sitting Bull's murder with the "very obstinate" chief himself.[70]

A more hostile *Times* story was the page one profile of Sitting Bull, the lead paragraph of which neatly but erroneously summed up Sitting Bull's infamous public identity:

> Sitting Bull, of all the Indians, was the most unrelenting, the most hostile, the most sagacious, the most cruel, and the most desperate foe of any chief of modern times. He never assented to the control of the United States Government over his people, but persistently fought the troops whenever they came in his way.[71]

This statement recognized Sitting Bull as the ultimate Indian enemy, hardly surprising in the continuing Ghost Dance paranoia. But like previous press reviews of his life, this characterization oversimplified Sitting Bull's hostility and overlooked the more peaceful aspects of his relationship to whites. Even in 1890, the public needed an "evil Indian" and the *Times* obliged, creating a Sitting Bull who was every bit as cruel and stubborn as the public imaged him to be. Such a portrait reinforced Sitting Bull's most evil identity and helped justify his murder to millions of American readers.

The *Times* editorial emphasized similar points. The paper attached a string of unfavorable descriptors to Sitting Bull's name. He was "mischievous and turbulent," "bumptious and bombinating," "distinguished for his impracticality and apparent motivelessness," and known for his "pure cussedness." The *Times* recalled that the "old savage" had once escaped to Canada where he "openly practiced polygamy, free trade, and other revolting vices at which we were aiming moral and patriotic legislation." The editorial also blamed "the old reprobate" for the Ghost Dance troubles. The *Times* concluded with this colorful comparison: "The announcement of his death is not calculated to arouse any other emotions than those excited the other day by the slaying of a 'rogue' elephant in Cincinnati, though no quadruped ever did do much widely extended and long continued mischief as Sitting Bull."[72] The editorial's explanation of Sitting Bull focused on his racial identity—his "Indianness." Other people were "mischievous" as well as "bumptious," but Sitting Bull was portrayed this way mainly because he was an Indian. That racial logic accounts for this passage:

> Bull would undoubtedly have been a much more comfortable old savage if he had settled down under the aegis of the United States to draw his rations and to lament loudly whenever he found them deficient in quantity, for it is inconceivable that the red man should reject anything edible on the score of its quality. He has, however, persistently been of the opinion that
>
> "One crowded hour of glorious life
> Is worth an age without a name,"
>
> and in his time he has had many crowded hours in setting traps for the United States troops, or in fighting them, or in running away from them.[73]

This was Sitting Bull's editorial send-off in the *Times*: the "savage red man" in his truest and most dangerous form.

The Chicago *Times* ran the news of Sitting Bull's death on page one. But unlike other papers, the *Times* had a writer who had met Sitting Bull, the Indian war correspondent John

Finerty. Finerty provided the paper with a more complex characterization of the fallen chief. "Sitting Bull was a striking personality," Finerty recalled. He described Sitting Bull's facial features, labeling him "the perfect specimen of the fast-dying race." Despite this "perfection," Finerty was no fan of Sitting Bull. The man was undistinguished in war, Finerty claimed, though he was a prime example of the "sagacity and cunning that have always been considered among the chief attributes of the red man's character."[74] Despite Finerty's factual errors and personal misgivings about Sitting Bull, his brief profile in the Chicago *Times* offered a more meaningful portrait of Sitting Bull than most of the other reports published at his death.

Boston's largest newspaper, the 150,000-circulation *Daily Globe,* also carried Sitting Bull's death on page one, accompanied by several sidebars and a long profile of the chief.[75] Although the reports were factual, Sitting Bull was roundly criticized as an enemy of whites and their civilization. Like the New York *Times*, the *Globe* resorted to clichés to explain Sitting Bull's life story. One headline referred to him as a "Wily Savage" while another summarized his life, declaring simply "Sitting Bull Was Bad."[76] The profile built up the chief as a "remarkable representative of the Red Man's race" and "the most famous of his kind." But these were hardly compliments, since Sitting Bull's fame was based on his "craftiness and cruelty" and his "savage nature."

Given this savagery, the *Globe* was unable to praise Sitting Bull forthrightly. Instead of saying, "Sitting Bull had several good qualities," the paper struck a carefully qualified negative pose: "Sitting Bull was not devoid of some good qualities." One of these qualities, the paper explained, was Sitting Bull's devotion to his tribe, a fact no one was likely to dispute. Despite a host of fair and accurate assessments of Sitting Bull, the profile painted a picture of an untrustworthy and mean-spirited man. Even as a youth, the paper claimed, he was "not given to any of those boyish sports which Fenimore Cooper has set up as a standard." In addition, "He was lazy and vicious and never told the truth when a lie would serve better."

These harsh comments were underscored by two editorial comments on Sitting Bull's murder. The day the news broke, the editorialist quipped: "If Sitting Bull is really dead the impossible has come to pass. He has become a good Indian."[77] The following day, the *Globe* returned—sarcastically—to a theme the paper perceived to be lacking in the late chief: honesty. "If the parents of SITTING BULL had named him LYING BULL they would have hit nearer the mark. There is no authentic record on any occasion on which the late distinguished Sioux statesman ever told the truth if he was sober," the *Globe* said.[78]

The Boston *Evening Transcript* was more sympathetic, though this was not always obvious. One early wire story on Sitting Bull's death quoted Lt. Colonel Henry Corbin. Sitting Bull was a "mischief-maker," Corbin said. "He has never been a chief, nor even a warrior of high order," Corbin added. At the Little Bighorn, Corbin said, he "skipped out with his people and got away from danger."[79] The following day, a story from Standing Rock opened with a quote from Sitting Bull himself: "I'll fight and die before any white man can make me an agency Indian"—an accurate quote, perhaps, but one that neglected his last nine years as a peaceful farmer at Standing Rock. The story also referred to the Sioux chief as "probably one of the brainiest Indians that ever lived, one of the most picturesque and characteristic incidents of American history" and cited his "oft-expressed wish to be remembered as the last Indian on the continent to give up his rifle."[80]

The *Transcript's* editorials picked up on these ideas, recognizing Sitting Bull's ferocity and stubbornness but not his leadership abilities. Commenting on Sitting Bull's role as a statesman, the *Transcript* conceded that he has "a great deal of craft and cunning"—two terms often associated with successful chiefs—but that he was not "on a level with such forest statesmen as King Philip, or Pontiac, or Tecumseh." The editorial concluded, "Great in war, daring in design, wise in counsel, Philip, Pontiac, and Tecumseh were chiefs whose deeds justified Cooper's delineation of 'the noble redman.'"[81] Even in death, Sitting Bull did not meet Cooper's or the *Transcript's* measure of the "noble" Indian.

Despite the errors of fact and the lingering hostility toward Sitting Bull, the *Transcript* was not close-minded on Indian issues. This became clear after the Wounded Knee massacre of December 29. In the aftermath of this new bloodshed, the *Transcript* published a long and sympathetic review of Indian policy that offered an alternative to the official view of the "Indian Problem." In contrast to news and editorials just three weeks earlier, this article cited reports that

Sitting Bull "was wantonly murdered at the beginning of the present outbreak."[82] The bulk of the article was a recounting of wrongs done to the tribes, from the "holocaust" at Gnadenhutten, Pennsylvania, in 1779, to Chivington and the Sand Creek massacre in 1864 and the Camp Grant massacre of 1871. The writer, Thomas Addison, cited reformer Helen Hunt Jackson, General O. O. Howard and others to make his case that Indians were honest and decent people. The most significant aspect of the article was its articulation of the Indian viewpoint and its pointed challenge to the status quo. Addison wrote:

> Not only have we dispossessed [the Indian] of his lands; not only have we paid him pauper prices for it; not only have we driven him into regions where the utmost industry fails to extract a living from the soil; but we have sought to annul his traditional customs, to confine and hem him in by force in sections of country that are as unattractive as can well be imagined. The Israelites had the whole desert to wander in, but the Indian has not even that sorry privilege.[83]

This remarkable passage captures the reform spirit one might expect in Boston. But it took the terrible tragedy at Wounded Knee Creek for the paper to offer an alternative view, and then it was a contribution from a Boston reformer. Like much of the American press, the *Transcript* itself offered no editorial on Wounded Knee.

Conclusions

The themes of Sitting Bull's newspaper identity traced an arc from violence and hostility after the Little Bighorn to ridicule and curiosity during his exhibition years and then to fear and hostility again in the Ghost Dance movement. In each of these phases, Sitting Bull was narrowly portrayed, his personal qualities, his abilities as a Lakota leader, and his hopes for his people barely glimpsed and rarely understood. For most of his public life, Sitting Bull was known as a notorious enemy of American progress and expansion, so demonized that he could not be accurately represented in the press. When it became clear that Sitting Bull's camp was responsible for the massacre of Custer and his men, the public demanded and the press provided an appropriate Indian villain—Sitting Bull. But this was a newspaper Indian whose identity owed more to the needs of a vindictive nation than to Sitting Bull's real activities along the Little

Bighorn. Sitting Bull's identity shifted dramatically as his perceived power diminished and he surrendered; then he could be imagined as a plains bumpkin impressed by city life and, with Buffalo Bill's help, as a living relic of the mythic West. Finally, in the violence and hysteria surrounding his death, Sitting Bull's identity returned again to the strongest and most popular native theme: savagery.

Despite the variations of his identity, most of the things Americans knew about Sitting Bull were either wrong or incomplete. Sitting Bull's life and death were reported by the press in ways that reinforced the expansionist ideology of Manifest Destiny and gave almost no credence to native responses to that ideology. In his most humane public identity, such as the one created by Charles Sanford Diehl, Sitting Bull emerged more fully as an individual but he remained a stranger, his life and culture so primitive and removed from civilization that it could not be fully understood. Even when he got the rare opportunity to speak for himself in interviews or speeches, Sitting Bull could not control the headlines, editing and themes of the stories that contained his words. In short, Sitting Bull's popular identity was always in the hands of people who knew little about him—but assumed they knew enough. The Sitting Bull of the papers and the man himself were often worlds apart.

Though the military war against the Indians was ending and the end of the frontier was near, Native Americans in 1890 remained subject to the ideology of progress and civilization. It was that ideology that infused the newspapers and that kept Indians firmly identified as an inferior people, in need of language, religion, manners, job skills, and personal habits necessary to enter the American mainstream. To the press and most of the public, there was no place for the "old" Indian in the new century. Those days were gone. Now more than ever, American ideology required that Indians change. Sitting Bull had not changed and that cost him his life.

Sitting Bull's popular identity is significant because of his enduring popularity in American culture. Of the thousands of native leaders who achieved prominence in American history, only a handful—Geronimo, Crazy Horse, Squanto, Sequoyah, Pocahontas, Cochise, Sacagawea and a few others—have made a permanent mark on the popular mind. Of these few, Sitting Bull stands out, linked forever to the victory over Custer at the Little Bighorn. With that claim to immortality and the promotional genius of Buffalo Bill, the Sioux themselves came to represent all American Indians, regardless of the differences between tribes.[84] As a leading Sioux warrior, always imagined in war paint, with full bonnet astride his horse, Sitting Bull became known as the greatest Sioux, the archetype of the American Indian, the one man in whom all the myths and tales of native life could be projected. This was a hopelessly simple way of imagining American Indians, but simplicity was also its greatest strength because simple, one-dimensional Indians could be easily portrayed and easily understood by the press and public alike.

Notes

[1] The New York *Times,* 10 July 1876, 5.

[2] The Chicago *Times,* 14 November 1877, 5.

[3] Boston *Evening Transcript,* 16 December 1890, 1.

[4] The history of American misunderstandings of Native Americans and their cultures has been documented by many scholars. Among the most important studies are Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present,* New York: Vintage Books, 1978, and Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind,* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. The best book on coverage of the Indian Wars is Oliver Knight, *Following the Indian Wars: The Story of the Newspaper Correspondents Among the Indian Campaigners,* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960.

[5] Berkhofer, pp. 49-55.

[6] The account is drawn from Robert M. Utley's acclaimed recent biography, *The Lance and the Shield: The Life and Times of Sitting Bull*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1993, 3.

[7] Utley, 6

[8] Utley, 11.

[9] Utley, 16.

[10] Utley, 33.

[11] Utley, 35.

[12] Utley, 35.

[13] Utley, 36.

[14] See, for example, The New York *Times,* 1 July 1876, 1. This story reported that Red Cloud's influence had waned and that Sitting Bull had assumed control of Red Cloud's band of Teton Sioux.

[15] See Kellogg's reports, signed "Frontier," on 17 May 1876, 1; 14 June 1876, 2; and 21 June 1876, 1.

[16] New York *Herald,* 21 June 1876, 6-7.

[17] Chicago *Tribune,* 8 July 1876, 4.

[18] Bismarck *Tribune,* 12 July 1876, 1. Also see the Bismarck *Tribune,* 1 November 1876, 1, which claims that Sitting Bull "planned the entire Indian campaign...."

[19] Chicago *Tribune,* 7 July 1876, 1.

[20] Chicago *Tribune,* 7 July 1876, 4.

[21] Chicago *Tribune,* 15 July 1876, 6.

[22] Some of these claims are mentioned in a satirical letter from "Bismarck, Jr.," Bismarck *Tribune*, 30 August 1876, 4. Also see Shirley A. Leckie, *Elizabeth Bacon Custer and the Making of a Myth*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993, 202.

[23] Bismarck *Tribune*, 12 July 1876, 2.

[24] Utley, *The Lance and the Shield*, 162-63.

[25] Utley, *The Lance and the Shield*, 164.

[26] Richard Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, New York: HarperPerennial, 1985, 436.

[27] New York *Herald*, 25 June 1876, 8.

[28] New York *Herald*, 9 July 1876, 3.

[29] New York *Herald*, 9 July 1876, 3.

[30] New York *Herald*, 9 July 1876, 6.

[31] Slotkin, *The Fatal Environment*, 460.

[32] Slotkin develops this connection in detail; see *The Fatal Environment*, 463-468.

[33] See, for example, initial Little Bighorn reports in the Chicago *Tribune*, 4 July 1876, 1; the New York *Times*, 6 July 1876, 1; and the Bismarck *Tribune* 12 July 1876, 1.

[34] The New York *Times*, 7 July 1876, 1.

[35] The New York *Times*, 7 July 1876, 1.

[36] The New York *Times*, 10 July 1876, 5.

[37] The New York *Times*, 10 July 1876, 5.

[38] The Bismarck *Tribune*, 12 July 1876, 1.

[39] The Bismarck *Tribune*, 12 July 1876, 2.

[40] The Bismarck *Tribune*, 19 July 1876, 2.

[41] The Bismarck *Tribune*, 30 August 1876, 4.

[42] The Bismarck *Tribune*, 20 August 1876, 4.

[43] Attributed to the Minneapolis *Tribune* in The Bismarck *Tribune*, 25 October 1876, 2.

[44] Chicago *Times*, 23 October 1877, 6.

[45] Chicago *Times*, 23 October 1877, 6.

[46] Chicago *Times*, 14 November 1877, 5.

[47] This summary is drawn from Utley, 225-238.

[48] *Pioneer Press,* 15 March 1884, 8.

[49] *Pioneer Press,* 17 March 17, 1884, 7.

[50] *Pioneer Press,* 16 March 1884, 12.

[51] The Bismarck *Tribune,* 21 March 1884, 4.

[52] The Bismarck *Tribune,* 21 March 1884, 4.

[53] The Bismarck *Tribune,* 21 March 1884, 4.

[54] Utley, 262-63.

[55] New York *Herald,* 14 September 1884, 12. The same wording appeared in a similar ad in the New York *Times* on September 14.

[56] New York *Times,* 12 September 1884, 5.

[57] Don Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill,* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960, 316.

[58] Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill,* 316.

[59] Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill,* 316. Russell notes, however, that this warm reception was a switch for the Canadian government, which had offered a much cooler welcome when Sitting Bull and his band had taken refuge in Canada in the 1870s.

[60] Toronto *Globe,* 24 August 1885, 6.

[61] Washington *Post,* 23 June 1885, 1.

[62] Detroit *Evening Journal,* 3 September 1885, 2.

[63] James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom,* New York: Oxford University Press, 1988, 797.

[64] Detroit *Evening Journal,* 3 September 1885, 2.

[65] Detroit *Evening Journal,* 5 September 1885, 2.

[66] Detroit *Evening Journal,* 5 September 1885, 2.

[67] See, for example, the Boston *Evening Transcript,* 16 December 1890, 3, and 20 December 1890, 1, and the New York *Times,* 16 December 1890, 1. The press role in the Wounded Knee affair is documented in Elmo Scott Watson, "The Last Indian War, 1890-91—A Study of Newspaper Jingoism," *Journalism Quarterly* 20:3 (September 1943), 205-219. Also see John E. Carter's, "Making Pictures for a News-Hungry Nation," in Richard E. Jensen, R. Eli Paul, and John E. Carter, *Eyewitness at Wounded Knee,* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991.

[68] Watson, 214-15.

[69] Drawn from Utley, 299-302.

[70] The New York *Times*, 16 December 1890, 1.

[71] The New York *Times*, 16 December 1890, 1.

[72] The New York *Times*, 16 December 1890, 4.

[73] The New York *Times*, 16 December 1890, 4.

[74] Chicago *Times*, 16 December 1890, 7.

[75] Michael Emery and Edwin Emery, *The Press and America* (6th ed.), Englewood Cliff, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1988, 195.

[76] The Boston *Daily Globe*, 16 December 1890, 1.

[77] The Boston *Daily Globe*, 16 December 1890, 4.

[78] The Boston *Daily Globe*, 17 December 1890, 4.

[79] Boston *Evening Transcript*, 16 December 1890, 1.

[80] Boston *Evening Transcript*, 17 December 1890, 1.

[81] Boston *Evening Transcript*, 18 December 1890, 4.

[82] Boston *Evening Transcript*, 9 January 1891, 6.

[83] Boston *Evening Transcript*, 9 January 1891, 6.

[84] Phyllis Rogers, "'Buffalo Bill' and the Siouan Image," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 7: 3 (1983), 43-53. Rogers recounts a telling moment in Poland, where she identified herself as a Navaho. This word puzzled her hosts, until they recalled the only Indians they knew, the Sioux, which they pronounced as "Sukes." For these Europeans, all Native Americans were "Sukes."

From Populist to Patrician: Edward H. Butler's Buffalo News and the Crisis of Labor, 1877-1892

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Abstract

From Populist to Patrician: Edward H. Butler's Buffalo *News* and the Crisis of Labor, 1877-1892

Edward H. Butler founded the Buffalo *Sunday Morning News* in 1873 for two reasons: To fight the entrenched interests that controlled the city's politics, economics and journalism, and to fulfill his dream of becoming a respected and wealthy newspaper publisher. He succeeded at both. In time, however, the twin forces that converged to shape his identity and fuel his rise to fame and influence - civic idealism and hard-headed entrepreneur - diverged

Butler brought a new journalism to Buffalo - independent, populist, defiant, modern. But the success that journalism wrought served to make his life and interests remote from the very people he championed. Within two decades, Butler was transformed from friend of workingmen to foe of labor and labor unions. This paper explores the responses of Butler's Buffalo *News* to the great,labor disturbances of 1877 and 1892 and shows how the passionate reformist editor who championed labor during the first strike grew into a wealthy and established member of the elite who denounced labor and called for its defeat by arms during the second.

Edward H. Butler was an innovative and prominent editor during the late nineteenth century who dominated the city's journalism, wielded considerable power in New York politics and counted the giants of journalism as his friends. Butler was wealthy and successful when he died in 1914, but the times had largely passed him by. His correspondence and his paper's records remained locked away until they were made available at the State University College at Buffalo in 1992. This paper is part of an ongoing research project to rediscover Butler, a formidable figure in his own right who was also emblematic of the emerging modern newspaper publishers of the late nineteenth century.

Edward H. Butler founded the Buffalo Sunday Morning News in 1873 for two reasons: To fight the entrenched interests that controlled the city's politics, economics and journalism, and to fulfill his dream of becoming a respected and wealthy newspaper publisher. He succeeded at both. In time, however, the twin forces that converged to shape his identity and fuel his rise to fame and influence - civic idealism and hard-headed entrepreneurship - diverged.

As the Sunday Morning News and, later, the penny daily Buffalo Evening News, grew into profitable and powerful institutions in Western New York by offering readers hard-hitting and up-to-the-minute news and new political options, Butler found increasing contradictions between his attacks on the powerful and his own growing power and wealth.

During his first 15 years in Buffalo, Butler led reform fights against the political rings[1], clamored for better pay and working conditions for laborers, and, two years before Joseph Pulitizer opened the New York World, conducted a graphic and sophisticated crusade on behalf of impoverished Polish immigrants.[2] Along the way he gained the respect and friendship of Grover Cleveland, whom he helped launch on a political career,[3] New York Times Publisher Adolph Ochs, who observed that Butler seemed "actually to have been born to the calling" of journalism[4], and Louisville Courier Publisher Henry Watterson[5]. But the success as a crusading and innovative publisher that won Butler the loyalty of readers and the respect of peers drove a wedge between his ideals and his ambitions. As the circulation of the Evening News approached 100,000 - dwarfing all other journals in Buffalo - Butler was becoming unambiguously a member of the city's, and the state's, ruling elite.

By 1892, when the state's publishers visited Buffalo for their annual convention, Butler, the president, made clear his priorities.

Butler's speech to his colleagues was a dramatic contrast to the editorials he had written as an unknown but visionary and reform-minded editor at the start of the journey that had led him to the rostrum on this hot July day.

As a young man, Edward H. Butler had denounced editors who ran newspapers primarily for personal financial gain as "low scums,"[6] and ridiculed partisan publishers as "old fogies."[7] By 1892, however, Butler himself was immensely wealthy and was not only personally convinced of the soundness of Republican policies, but a man of power within the party;[8] abandoning the "manly independence"[9] he had initially espoused, he had recently begun to throw the support of his newspapers enthusiastically behind the party's campaigns.

So much had changed. Once Butler had promoted journalism as a moral beacon for the community, but now he smirked at those who wasted time talking of the "loftier mission" of the press.[10] He congratulated his peers for coming "to the understanding that the publishing of a newspaper is a business as well as conducting a dry goods store, a grocery or a railroad, and like those enterprises a business conducted mainly for profit."[11] He continued:

> I believe in plain words and practical ideas, and am not going to 'paint the lilly' or tell you about the sun gleaming on the waves of Lake Erie as she washes the shores of this hospitable city, or indulge in any matter of that kind. I am not going to tell you how you should interest yourselves in the building up of the community and everybody's business interests to the neglect of your own, for I have the suspicion you have heard that before . . ."[12]

His fellow publishers certainly had "heard that before" - from the pen of the young Butler, among others. But as the century drew to a close, Butler had largely abandoned the idealism and defiance of his youth. Where once he had reached out in friendship to workingmen, he now cursed the labor unions; where once he had single-handedly pressed for the elimination of at-grade railroad crossings in the name of public safety, he now railed against rutted streets because they interfered with his motoring excursions;[13] where once he had castigated the practice of political patronage, he now dispensed it. One can detect in Butler's speech a vague acknowledgement of how much his values had changed, and he himself, revealed, in part, why they had so changed:

> I don't wish our members to regard this address as all on the money side of it, but when you come right down to the foundation, it is pretty nearly what you are publishing newspapers for. I do not want to paraphrase Flanagan of Texas, whose famous convention speech ranks, so far as emphasis goes, with that of Patrick Henry, but if we are not in this business for money, what are we in it for? 'Money,' said the elder Bennett, 'is the root of all evil, but give me the root.'[14]

In many ways the conundrum the shaped Butler's destiny - of fighting the powerful while aspiring to be one of the powerful - illustrates the inherent contradictions that shaped modern journalism as it passed from partisan mouthpiece to corporate institution. Edward Butler's newspapers, which came to dominate Buffalo through their populist politics and crusading spirit, were launched in opposition to the partisan papers that dominated Buffalo after the Civil War. In editorials, Butler had lashed out at the political parties that maintained a stranglehold over civic affairs, and the large corporations that increasingly dictated the social and economic life of the city.

The very success of Butler's populist philosophy, however, inexorably pushed Butler into city's elite. In weakening the city's political parties, Butler accrued significant political power to itself. And, as his newspapers grew and his business affairs became more complex, he increasingly relied on technological innovations, investment in physical plant and modern organizational principles - the underpinnings of the emerging corporation - to manage them.

As his social and economic status changed, his relationships with the city's various constituencies also naturally changed. None of these relationships underwent a more radical change than Butler's relationship with workingmen, whom he had championed since the first days of the Buffalo Sunday Morning News. Uncomfortably for Butler, his relations with the city's workers reached a crisis at the very moment he entertained his journalistic peers and sold them on the virtues of Buffalo.

The publishers who visited Buffalo that summer were treated to concerts, tours of the city and a visit to Niagara Falls. In a daily box in the Evening News headlined "A Few Cold Facts About Buffalo," Butler boasted of the 33 rail lines that entered the city, it's booming population, which was approaching 300,000, and its 2,500 factories. Poised on the shores of Lake Erie, the city was a center for both lake and rail traffic.[15] Things could not have looked brighter.

Butler could take a large share of the credit for the city's growth and progressive direction. He had, from the first days of the Buffalo Sunday Morning News, encouraged political reform, industrial innovation and efficiency, and preached the need for a cooperative social order in which entrepreneurs who thrived had a responsibility to share their bounty with the men who labored for them.

As progressive and fair-minded as Butler had been, however, his vision of a harmonious social order was underpinned by hierarchy and as Butler grew older his vision of reform grew closer to the reform ideals held by elitist liberals he had once scorned: the "best men" should lead, the company owner should determine all of the particulars of the labor contract, and the immigrants and working classes who Butler had championed should know their place and submit to the

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will and the vision of their betters.

At the same time, by 1892 it was becoming clear that such a social arrangement was implausible. Everywhere that summer, as Butler showed off his city to its visitors, labor warfare was touching a match to the industrial and social orders that men like Butler envisioned for the cities and their nations.

Each day of the convention, stories that detailed the doings of the newspaper publishers ran side by side with ominous reports of violent clashes between capital and labor in Homestead, in Cleveland, in Detroit, in Spokane, in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho. Embarrassingly for Butler, the newsboys who delivered his newspaper were also on strike, and daily thefts of the paper prompted him to issue almost daily threats that anyone who interfered with its delivery would be arrested and punished.[16] The newsboys strike, while annoying, was hardly violent.

Butler, however, had a portent that the strikes devastating the industrial operations and social fabric of other cities might soon spread to Buffalo. If they did, he wanted the city's business and political leaders to be prepared.

In a July 13 editorial, in the midst of the Homestead Steel strike, the Buffalo Evening News applauded the decision of Pennsylvania Governor

Pattison to call in the state militia.[17] The Evening News warned that Buffalo's leaders should not hesitate to demand similar military protection if the strikes reached Buffalo.

> The business men of Buffalo who have property to lose know how to appreciate the respect in which the National Guard is held in this and other States. They know what inspires that respect. The character of any mass of men is the character of the individuals who compose it. It is because our State regiments are composed of manly, courageous, well-disciplined men that they inspire respect when they are called out to prevent disorder as well as quell it.[18]

While the editorial held out hope that the violence would not engulf Buffalo as it had other cities, it asserted that should it come, "the National Guardsmen are our best protection against riot and destruction of property."[19] If Buffalo's leaders were vigilant and reacted quickly to a strike they would maintain control of the city, and the hierarchy over which they presided would hold.

Butler looked to the past for assurances that Buffalo's future, and the hegemony of its leaders, would not be harmed by rebellious workingmen. "Not a great many years ago - only fifteen," the editorial said, "Buffalo had to be protected by the National Guard during the great railroad strikes, and the soldiers did their work gallantly and well. Their presence at the point of disturbance prevented a serious outbreak, and prevention is always better in such cases than cure." [20]

Butler's history lesson, however, was faulty, as were his memory and the institutional memory of his newspapers. For 15 years earlier, the publisher had a far different view of the place of workingmen in the city and his newspaper had told a far different story of the militia's role in quelling the strike.

The difference between the views of the young, struggling Edward H. Butler who was scorned by rivals for his populist sympathies, and the older, prosperous Butler who was being honored as a leader of the state and city press, reveals much about the evolution of the man, his newspapers, and the city.

The militia had become embroiled in the great strike of 1877, that much was true. But little else about the lesson Butler drew from the strike corresponded with the stories and editorials he had published then.

When the first great rail strike spread up the Erie Road in July, 1877, violence followed quickly. In the wake of the strike, Butler's Sunday Morning News declared, "Never before in the history of the city did a public demonstration assume so suddenly such formidable proportions, and so many ugly features."[21]

When the firemen and brakemen of the Buffalo and Erie Railroad stopped working and began to halt all rail traffic into and out of the city, state officials rushed to defeat them with force. Many city newspapers applauded the decision to send in the state militia to stop the strike and urged the soldiers to deal with the strikers decisively and brutally, to "shoot these men down like beasts."[22]

Butler's Sunday Morning News, in contrast, defended the workers and condemned military intervention. The paper asserted that the rail workers had every right to strike in the face of an unfair wage reduction, and castigated the governor for allowing railroad management "to call upon the military to settle a business question."[23]

The newspaper further charged that instead of considering the particulars of the Buffalo situation, the governor had acted out of panic and fear because of the violent rail strike in Baltimore that preceded, and likely spurred, the Buffalo strike. "Were it not for the strike following so immediately in the wake of the Baltimore and Ohio horrors, it would have occasioned but little excitement, and the local public would have remained little more than mere spectators of a struggle between a rail road company and its employees, concerning a question of rights and dollars and cents," the paper opined.[24]

Worse than the decision to call in the troops in the first place, however, was the conduct of the soldiers and their commanders once they arrived in the city. The soldiers, the newspaper reported, were ill-trained, poorly deployed, and undisciplined. Indeed, the Sunday Morning News article describing the strike violence laid the blame for it at the feet of the military. "The military, in fact, created the mobs which the Buffalo police and specials had to step in and disperse. In every collision of the military with the mobs, the former were beaten . . . even the worst rioters seemed to respect the police, while the soldiers were looked upon as men of blood and war [and] made the mobs more active and violent. Twenty policemen armed with clubs and civil authority were more effective in every conflict than a hundred soldiers armed with loaded muskets and bayonets."[25]

The news coverage of the strike was overwhelmingly pro-worker. Even where the paper had proof of violence against the police, the military, or the city itself, it ascribed such violence to "not a few roughs and tramps" who took advantage of a peaceful strike to cause trouble and settle their own scores against Buffalo's powerful interests. "The Erie men," the newspaper concluded, "were temperate and not to be found among the gangs marauding about the city; and yet with all this expression of sentiment favorable to the strike, not one official act was performed to acknowledge the distinction between the rioters and the strikers."[26]

In an editorial that accompanied the news stories about the strike, Butler laid out his position on the rights of capital and labor. Given his strong liberal/reform sensibility, it was not surprising that while he supported workers' rights to strike, and in fact supported the justice of their cause in this particular strike, he did not believe workingmen automatically deserved to prevail in every action against management.

At the root of his argument was his belief in the free contract and the necessity of capital and labor to solve their own problems without interference from the government. In fact, he did not generally support the idea of striking at all - although he recognized the right to strike - because too often it led to conflicts like the one that had just injured Buffalo.

> Even the most impracticable idealist - and the ranks of the insurgents are full of such - must acknowledge that there is small chance of improvement in the condition of unemployment

> growing out of the destruction and employer. The SUNDAY NEWS, while defending the rights of the working classes, has always condemned and advised such a course and always shall. It is hardly probable that a mill owner will be induced to add to the wages of his employers simply from the fact that the latter have burned his mill.[27]

While Butler chastened workers as a friend might, however, he had nothing but harsh words for the railroad companies and the government officials - and journalists - who aided them in their dominance of labor.

> And there is another side to this question that has been completely ignored in the press, which is this: IS the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad corporation entirely blameless? Is it not equally to blame for bringing this terrible condition of affairs?[28]

In fact, the editorial concluded, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was more than equally to blame for the strike. Butler documented its enormous expansion and profits and showed how it was taking advantage of a stagnant labor market to exploit workers with "starve to death wages"[29] and the "evading moral responsibility" for their actions. Without reform, injustice and the violence that grew from it would continue. ". . .if the way seems hedged up so that the one side cannot even get a hearing so powerful has the other side become through unprincipled legislators, and so oppressive are its inclinations,"[30] then it stood to reason that workers would continue to seek justice, however futilely, through violence.

If anything good could be found in the strike at all, the Sunday Morning News concluded, it was that, "when a strike or movement to maintain or secure wages occurs in the future, the Railroad companies will feel more disposed to compromise the difficulties than ever before."[31]

In the aftermath of the strike, Butler expanded the "Labor Column" he had established soon after launching the paper and moved it temporarily to the front page. In one column, Butler proposed to workingmen that they "might hold the balance of power" nationally and in Buffalo.[32] In a passionate summation of the workingman's plight, Butler declared:

> The workingmen of today are men who think. They have cause to think. They are out of work and they wonder why it is. They cannot get bread for themselves and their families and wonder why that is. They helped elect men to office who promised to legislate better times and they wonder why better times do not come. Their little property has been eaten up by living and taxes, they themselves are on the verge of starvation and it is no wonder that they wonder why it is so.[33]

Butler applauded the men for striking, but cautioned that striking for short-term pay increases without a larger agenda would not advance their cause. Instead, they must also, "strike at the ballot box," and "shake both parties."[34] Only when they ran candidates and held power for themselves would workingmen have the necessary leverage to fight the big corporations.

By 1892, Butler had a far different view of Buffalo's workingmen. For in the intervening years since the great strike, the power of organized labor had grown. Union members could now be found in great numbers in trades throughout the city - including the mechanical departments of the News.

Butler was now a man of substantial property - a palatial new building for his newspapers was in the works - and the fate of his business was now inextricably tied through politics and commerce to the vested interests he had once decried.[35] When labor violence again visited Buffalo in 1892, Butler was in no position economically, politically, or temperamentally to rally to the workers' side.

The labor unrest that had been smoldering all summer in the city burst into flame on August 14 when striking switchmen set more than 50 freight cars ablaze just outside the city limits.[36] While the switchmen appealed to other rail workers to strike in sympathy, the Lehigh and Erie and Buffalo Creek railroads began transporting replacement workers to the city. The News devoted little coverage to the men's demands for a 10 hour day and denounced the strikers without considering the justice of those demands.

Under the huge headline "RIOTING", the newspaper expressed sympathy for the rail companies, the replacement workers and displaced passengers. It condemned the strikers as lawless.[37] The strike, it reported, had "grown from a mere formal demand for increased pay and shorter hours into a reign of terror and perpetration of acts and unbounded lawlessness and incendiarism."[38] An accompanying editorial called the strike a "Bad Business," and urged an end to the strike and punishment for the strikers.[39]

> There can be but one judgement on the events of yesterday and Saturday night in the Lehigh Yards at East Buffalo. The burning of railroad property, the derailing of trains, the assaults on workmen are a CRIME.[40]

The editorial urged strike leaders to stop the men from causing damage at the rail yards, but warned that if they did not, "There is sufficient force in Buffalo to deal with it effectively."[41]

As the strike wore on, the violence worsened and the headlines grew bigger, bolder and more shrill.

Evening News reporters were encamped with soldiers and traveled to the various points of conflict on a chartered rail car provided to the press by the railroad![42] Unlike the 1877 strike, the newspaper interviewed few workers, and when it did report the edicts of Grand Master Sweeney of the union, it was with an air of ridicule.[43]

By far the most dramatic illustration of Butler's turnaround came on August 16 when the Evening News led the call for the state militia to be sent to Buffalo.[44] It was soon dispatched. As trains carrying soldiers sped towards Buffalo, Butler published an editorial entitled "For Workingmen to Think Of."[45] Unlike his fiery defense of downtrodden workers in 1877, this message to laboring men was stern and unsympathetic. "Do the workmen of this country realize that there is such a thing as killing the goose that lays the golden egg?" he asked. Speaking from experience, he explained that, "it is much easier to pull down than build up business prosperity."[46]

Rather than blame the railroads for their economic plight and poor working conditions at the yards, the editorial explained lamely that the men should realize that "business cycles" of boom and bust governed economic events and that if a bust was due the men should resign themselves to ride it out. An editorial against sympathy strikes argued that the natural partners of workers not directly involved in the rail strikes were the railroad corporations, not their striking peers. [47]

By Thursday, August 17, the strike had spread to other rail yards and even other industries. While a headline declared that "ANARCHY!" reigned in Tennessee, where another labor battle raged,[48] the entire New York National Guard - 13,000 strong - arrived in Buffalo to break the strike.[49] Violence leveled off as the troops took control of the city, but the situation remained tense.

Soon it was revealed that a National Guard general was also a high official of the Lehigh Valley Erie Railroad.[50] Butler, who 15 years earlier had decried the fact that the power of the state was allied with the railroads, weakly explained that the general's position presented no conflict.

In response to scathing criticism of this arrangement in the New York Sun, the New York Herald, and the New York Telegram, Butler editorialized that such criticism was "ill-considered. The Telegram seems to forget that so far as the public are concerned there is but one side in this battle. The soldiers are fighting disturbers of peace and property, that is all. The 'contestant' whose orders General Doyle is obeying is the state of New York,"[51] and not the railroad. The editorial also noted that, "the newspapers are cooperating with the National Guard in repressing disorder."[52]

The strike sputtered on, but the appearance of 13,000 soldiers got the trains moving again, ensured protection for replacement workers and effectively disarmed the union, which sought unsuccessfully to modify its demands and strike a deal with the railroads. The Evening News would soon be able to report, with no small amount of glee, that Grandmaster Sweeney had been punched senseless by a striker who felt betrayed when Sweeney called off the strike and relinquished command of the union.[53] While the new Grandmaster vowed to continue the strike, and while sporadic acts of "fiendish" sabotage continued throughout the week, the strike was broken.[54]

Butler had written in 1877 that the lesson of the Great Strike was that workingmen oppressed by huge corporations and legislative toadies had a right to strike but could ensure a fairer playing field by mastering politics. He drew for his readers a far different lesson from the 1892 strike.

> Some hasty observers of the trouble at East Buffalo have jumped at the conclusion, because it is a big thing, that it is the beginning of

> a life and death struggle between capital and labor. It is not a struggle between capital and labor at all, but between anarchy and law."[55]

"Here is the lesson of the strike," the Evening News concluded at the end of the strike. "The militia is the one and sole dependence of our citizens for protection from riot and destruction to property." [56]

The contradictions that beset and ultimately ruined Butler's kinship with working people arose from his growing wealth and influence. As his success as a businessman and publisher was making him into the head of a vast and varied enterprise, the city's and the nation's laborers were gaining voice and power. For all of his modern impulses, Butler remained, in respect to his dealings with labor, a nineteenth century man. His attitude toward his own employees was generous but paternalistic.

In contrast to the liberal reformers in the 1870s, Butler staunchly defended workingmen during the strike of 1877. While E.L. Godkin's Nation denounced the strike as "the most extensive and deplorable . . . which ever took place in this or any other country,"[57] Butler had not only sympathized with labor's goals, but used his newspaper to further those goals.

Eric Foner argues that the strike of 1877 "confirmed the growing conservatism" of the Republican party and "underscored the alliance of the new industrial bourgeoisie with the Republican Party and the National state."[58] In 1877, Edward H. Butler was not yet a member of that new bourgeoisie; in 1892, he was.

Other shifts had occurred in the 15 years that separated the two strikes. The workingmen whom Butler had championed in 1877 were unorganized and, to Butler's mind directionless. He had hoped to channel the formidable power and talent among labor's ranks to towards goals he found reasonable and worthy by giving labor a forum in his newspaper and educating the workingmen on how to use it. But ultimately, the strike of 1877 had given workingmen "a national class conscious"[59] and they would set their own agenda.

By 1892, the labor movement, while still at a huge disadvantage, had progressed. The American Federation of Labor was formed in 1886 and the Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel, and Tin Workers, which represented the ill-fated Homestead workers, had formed soon after that.[60] These were well-organized unions with strong leaders and big war-chests. The ultimate target of the 1892 strike also was different. Whereas the 1877 strike was aimed at the machinations of capital, labor historian Joseph Rayback argues that pervasive mechanization of the workplace lay at the heart of the 1892 strike.[61] It was this relentless mechanization that stole craft from workers and made them increasingly dispensable.[62] To a technophile like Butler, a war against technology was a war against progress, a war against the future - or at least his vision of it.

Once a steadfast opponent of Buffalo's entrenched journals, Butler, by the 1890s, had much more in common with the men who ran them than with working people. In 1901, frustrated by the assertiveness of unions that had infiltrated the mechanical departments of the city's newspapers, he spurred formation of the "Association of Newspapers of Buffalo."[63]

Among other things, association members vowed to aid each other in case of natural disaster and would engage in collective negotiations with labor unions. Common cause as businessmen transcended whatever differences the city's publishers had over politics. If a labor dispute, "shall result in impediment to its business by strike or otherwise, then all other parties hereto and the newspapers represented by them upon demand shall render to said party . . . all possible assistance and cooperation in their power, even to extent of reducing the size of the issue of their paper, regardless of loss or disadvantage."[64]

In a sense, this agreement signaled that Butler's transformation from iconoclastic and independent advocate for the city's workers to a reactionary and patrician member of its elite was complete.

Butler never again supported a strike or a union. He remained conflicted, however, about the fate of the city's workingclass who had done so much to define his early identity as a journalist and build his circulation. After the hard winter of 1910, Butler wrote city councilman John Coleman urging him to help break a political wrangle that was holding up a public works project. "It seems as if the workingman has got to get the worst of it here all the time," Butler lamented. "Here, if they give a poor man a day's labor they think they are giving him a lump of gold. 'Buffalo means business,' we hear that all around. It means business for whom - for the workingman? This city is owned by the workingman."[65]

However, if workingmen were to have jobs, it would be up to the city's enlightened elements to provide them and it was not the place of workers to demand them or dictate their terms.

In 1912, a White House aide gathering information for commission hearings inquired about Butler's employment policies. The aging publisher seemed genuinely puzzled. His brusque reply demonstrated not only his resentment of organized labor, but his paternalistic pride that his was an establishment in which one would be glad to work. "In regard . . . 'the policy of the company towards its employees', I would say, it is not a company. I am sole owner and organizer of the NEWS." On the matter of pensions, Butler was equally abrupt: "I take care of my people when they get old if they are worthy of it. I retire them when they are no longer able to work."[66]

Butler's reply, however, also boasted about the open and fire-proof rooms of the newspaper and, especially, about an ice manufacturing device that purified drinking water in the plant.[67] He concluded the letter with what might fairly be called his philosophy of corporate risk and responsibility regarding labor:

> I am very careful about the employment of men. I do no want the undesirable kind. Of course it takes a great deal to get a desirable party, for trouble makers, dissatisfied fiends, who come from other cities to agitate will make trouble if they can for both themselves and the employer.[68]

Notes

[1] Unlike other penny-style papers, the Sunday Morning News took a profound interest in politics. Less than a year after it was founded, the newspaper attacked both political parties and crafted a successful bi-partisan People's Ticket. The campaign weakened both political parties by forcing them to share power and made clear that the independent voter, led by the independent Sunday Morning News, was a new political force to be reckoned with.

[2] Jacob Riis and Joseph Pulitzer's New York World are often credited with sparking the onset of reform or "expose" journalism at the advent of the muckraking era, but the Evening News' crusade for better living conditions for the city's Poles predated Riis tenement stories by 10 years. Butler's Polish crusade took place during the summer of 1881; Pulitzer founded the New York World in 1883; Riis classic book, How the Other Half Lives," based on his reporting for the World, was published in 1890.

[3] Butler first promoted Erie County Sheriff Grover Cleveland as Mayor of Buffalo and later lent his support to Cleveland in his runs for the governorship and the presidency. The two disagreed about the protective tariff, however, and after 1884 their relationship - and correspondence - turned icy.

[4] "A Typical Newspaper Man," New York Times, March 11, 1914, p. 10.

[5] Watterson was more than a friend to Butler, he was a hero. Butler once wrote him, "Truly Marse Henry, God has showered his gifts on you . . . I wish I were near you if only for a little while for inspiration." Butler letter to Henry Watterson, February 14, 1907, Butler papers at SUCB.

[6] Sunday Morning News, July 31, 1875, p. 1.

[7] ibid.

[8] Butler was a delegate to several Republican conventions; in addition, in 1896 he served as a presidential elector at large and in 1900 he presided over the electoral college. History of Buffalo, p. 332.

[9] Sunday Morning News, December 7, 1873, p. 1.

[10] Butler speech to New York Publisher's Association, July 13, 1892, Butler papers at SUCB.

[11] ibid.

[12] ibid.

[13] Butler was a a founding member of the Grade Crossing Commission, which was formed to eliminate at-grade railroad crossings in the city and later one of Buffalo's foremost automotive enthusiasts. Kirchofer, unpublished manuscript.

[14] Butler Speech to New York Publishers.

[15] "A Few Cold Facts About Buffalo," Evening News, August 19, 1892, p. 2 (and many subsequent editions).

[16] "$10 REWARD!" Evening News, August 19, 1892, p. 1.

[17] "An Argument that Comes Home," Evening News, July 13, 1892, p. 2.

[18] ibid.

[19] ibid.

[20] ibid.

[21] "The Great Strike," Sunday Morning News, July 29, 1877, p. 1.

[22] "Murderous Purposes," Sunday Morning News, July 29, 1877, p. 1.

[23] "A Review of the Strike," Sunday Morning News, July 29, 1877, p. 1. (editorial)

[24] ibid.

[25] "Buffalo Policemen," Sunday Morning News, July 29, 1877, p. 1.

[26] ibid.

[27] "A Review of the Strike," Sunday Morning News, July 29, 1877, p 1.

[28] ibid.

[29] ibid.

[30] ibid.

[31] ibid.

[32] "Workingmen: The Class that Might Hold the Balance of Power," Sunday Morning News, September 2, 1877, p. 1.

[33] ibid.

[34] ibid.

[35] In addition to political or editorial posts, Butler was a member of the board of the Grosvenor Library, originator and president of group charged with erecting a monument to slain president William McKinley, a director of the American Savings Bank, and a member of the board of trustees of the State Normal School at Buffalo. Municipality of Buffalo, p. 332.

[36] "More Fires!" Evening News, August 15, 1892, p. 1.

[37] "RIOTING! The Switchman's Strike Becomes Serious," Evening News, August 15, 1892, p. 1.

[38] ibid.

[39] "Bad Business," Evening News, August 15, 1892, p. 2.

[40] ibid.

[41] ibid.

[42] "UNDER ARMS!" Evening News, August 16, 1892, p. 1.

[43] As fires raged, the News caustically reported that "Mr. Sweeney is Sorry," and made it clear that he had caused the violence by calling the strike in the first place. "Mr. Sweeney is Sorry," Evening News, August 15, 1892, p. 1.

[44] "Bad Business," August 15, 1892, p. 2.

[45] "For Workingmen to Think Of," Evening News, August 16, 1892, p. 2.

[46] ibid.

[47] ibid.

[48] "ANARCHY! Troops Surrender to the Mob at Oliver Springs, Tenn.," Evening News, August 17, 1892, p. 1.

[49] "STRIKE SPREADING: All Troops in the State Sent," Evening News, August 18, 1892, p. 1.

[50] When Militia General Doyle's blatant conflict of interest was pointed out by strikers and their supporters, the News

supported his right to fill both roles. "PERSECUTED: General Doyle Says They're After Him and He Doesn't Like It," Evening News, August 19, p. 1.

[51] "Attacking General Doyle," (editorial) Evening News, August 19, p. 2.

[52] ibid.

[53] "THE STRIKE ENDED!" Evening News, August 25, 1892, p. 1.

[54] ibid.

[55] "One Lesson of the Strike," (editorial) Evening News, August 26, 1892, p. 1.

[56] ibid.

[57] Foner, A Short History of Reconstruction, p. 246.

[58] ibid.

[59] Rayback, A History of American Labor, p. 136.

[60] Rayback, p. 159.

[61] Rayback, p. 191.

[62] ibid.

[63] Articles of Incorporation, "Association of Newspapers of Buffalo," Butler papers at SUCB.

[64] ibid.

[65] Butler letter to John Coleman, April 1, 1910, Butler papers at SUCB.

[66] Butler to Mr. M.O. Chance, Secretary to Commission, White House, August 16, 1912, Butler papers at SUCB.

[67] ibid. (Butler boasted that the water he provided for his employees was "so pure that the surgeons of our city say they could use it in operations.")

[68] ibid.

"I Heare it so Variously Reported": News-letters, Newspapers and the Ministerial Network in New England, 1670-1730

By Sheila McCall McIntyre

James Noyes was ill-prepared when the postal carrier came early into Stonington, Connecticut in 1715. Expecting him to arrive on Wednesday as usual, his arrival on Monday left Noyes without enough time to write to his son, Joseph, a tutor at Yale College in Saybrook, Connecticut. Upset that the surprise visit interrupted his regular letter-exchange, Noyes requested that the postal carrier send his greetings when he arrived in Saybrook, and pledged to find another way to communicate with his son:

> I was just going to write having leizure when he came. The Post would not stay but promised to write a few lines to you, I think to write short & ventur this by some traveler, if it may get to you before the next post.

Noyes' letter contained his usual collection of local and familial news, nothing that a week's delay would complicate. News of a happy birth in the family, general good health in the community, another son's thriving farm business, and his satisfaction with his own preaching ability would certainly be no less welcome a week later than intended. His professions of love and admiration for his son, "that god hath counted you worthy to put you in the great work of the Gospel Ministry," demanded neither speedy conveyance, nor immediate reply. The letter contained no objectively 'important' news of colonial or transatlantic significance. This letter's importance lies in the silences, what Noyes chose not to report, and why he chose not to report it.[1]

Beginning with the arrival of the Boston News-Letter in 1704, published news-letters powerfully altered personal letter-exchange habits, as James Noyes' letters to his son, written between 1709 and 1715, reveal. Noyes received regular copies of the Boston News-Letter in Stonington, and reviewing the editions published between November 7 and December 5 highlight some of the news-worthy events which Noyes did not share with his son in the above-cited letter. The Church of Scotland proclaimed a fast on August 11 in "Consideration of the many evident Tokens of the Lord's Displeasure." King George enlarged the fund for the Bank of England, enacted trade barriers against imported fish, met with the envoy from France, appointed Colonel Burgess as Royal Governor of New England, and assured English Nonconformists that their sufferings would end. The Swedish and Danish fleets fought on the seas, Venetians battled Turks, and a great fire at Constantinople "consumed 10,000 Houses." Dozens of ships arrived in ports in England, New England, and beyond. New England's postal carriers left Boston, and returned safely with mail. Deep snow in Boston made travel difficult. Boston's merchants advertised women's shoes, cod-hooks, English boots, "good Cheshire Cheese," and "negro girls."[2]

Noyes neither reported, nor commented on, any of this news to his son in Saybrook. Assuming that his son had access to the same "public prints," Noyes depended on editor John Campbell's news-gathering and news-reporting activites for his own and his son's general information. While Campbell reported on recent events in the English Atlantic, Noyes concentrated his letter-writing energies on sharing personal matters with his colleagues and family. James Noyes unknowingly acknowledged the developing gulf between personal correspondence and newspapers to Joseph: "Loving Son y^{rs} I had by the post about a month Since, more welcome than the news print." Personal correspondence clearly still buoyed and informed receivers, but Campbell's newspaper had changed the nature of letter-exchange in New England.

By the second decade of the eighteenth century, two media, which were once inextricably linked, increasingly sought to fulfill different needs. News-gathering and news-reporting, once a vital component of ministerial letter-exchange, became less necessary with the simple exchange of published news sources.[3] Rather than re-writing the news, as many had done before 1704, ministers enclosed copies of the Boston News-Letter, or simply referred to recent events, assuming their receivers had heard (read) the news. Interpretation eventually supplanted reporting.

Sharing news was still necessary to both serve the parish community and to maintain a learned community of scattered clerical colleagues, but the medium and method for exchanging information gradually changed. Published colonial newspapers assumed responsibility for reporting events, while personal correspondence increasingly focused on commenting on that news, and on sharing the local and familial news which Boston's journalists understandably did not report. A letter's value became even more psychological and ritualistic -- more 'private'

-- as its news content decreased. This is not to say ministerial letter-sharing ceased. The letter became 'private' because its contents became more personal, not because a single receiver read it.

With Cotton Mather as a notable exception, the New England clergy welcomed the newspaper as another source to inform their own letter-exchange, and as another means to remain connected to colleagues settled far away, without feeling threatened about losing their 'power' over information.[4] The introduction of colonial newspapers enhanced a news-gathering system already firmly entrenched in New England culture.[5] The early colonial newspaper was neither an innovator, nor a feared competitor. Every personal letter passed on news -- familial, local, colonial, or international. Colonial New England's newspapers drew on long-standing communication networks for information, and their editors retained ties to well-placed personal correspondents throughout New England.

The arrival of newspapers did not completely end news-reporting via personal correspondence. The developing difference between the two forms of information diffusion was neither immediate nor monolithic. The two media shared many characteristics and intentions, even as they diverged. The similarities between early newspapers and personal news-letters were many: Newspapers and letters both relied on informal news-gathering by site-based informants, who performed as correspondents on two levels, as letter-writers, and as bearers of information, purposively dispatched to uncover the truth. Newspapers regularly published letters as news-stories, without altering the form or the content of the correspondence. Letters continued to provide information to the 'public prints'. Even the fact that the newspaper was sold does not necessarily separate it from other means of information diffusion.[6] Booksellers and publishers sold almanacs, wonder tales, sermons, and doctrinal tracts that focused on recent events, earthquakes and executions for example. Readers collected and referred to these works as a standing news record.

Colonial readers did not usually judge newspapers as more trustworthy than letters. Just as with personal correspondence, truth-claim was based on location, not on the form stories took. Early New England readers recognized that inclusion in the newspaper did not necessarily make something true.[7] Quoting information from an eye, or ear, witness validated the story far more powerfully than did the mere fact that it was printed, and readers of both personal letters and published newspapers wanted the news from someone who was there.

Therefore, in many ways, some of these personal letters were newspapers. While letters were usually neither printed nor sold, ministerial correspondence (news-letters) shared many characteristics of early colonial newspapers, especially the Boston News-Letter. Like the early newspapers, personal letters were often intended for a broad audience, based on reports from informed correspondents, included "timely" considerations of recent events, and were presented in a logical manner with only limited editorial interference.[8] As David Paul Nord suggested, early colonial letter-writers employed "reportorial empiricism":

> The methodology was essentially what we today call 'news reporting': the routine collation and citation of the statements of sources. The sources ranged widely, from leading scientists to folklore to average people with stories to tell. The role of the writer was not to conduct systematic empirical research, but rather to report the empirical statements of others.

Before including news in their personal correspondence, the ministers collected the news which others shared, and sought accurate information from the people best able to give it.[9]

It is precisely this 'sameness' which accounts for the ease with which ministers accepted newspapers. The Boston News-Letter's similarities with their own news-letters encouraged the ministers to trust it, refer to it, and eventually replace their own news-reporting with it. In order to understand how ministers eventually relinquished their primary role as news-gatherers, it is crucial to explain how ministers reported news before 1704, and how the Boston News-Letter itself facilitated the transition from personal news-letter to published newspaper. By 1727, the ministers adopted the outward structure of a newspaper by publishing their own in Boston, thereby formalizing the letter-sharing they had enjoyed throughout the seventeenth century. The Weekly Journal's printed elaboration of personal letter-exchange exemplifies the successful merger of two forms of communication: personal letters and printed news.

Before the arrival of colonial newspapers beginning in 1704, information spread primarily through personal correspondence and oral exchange. Ministers were the logical conduits of news, as they often enjoyed letter-exchange with distantly-settled colleagues and transatlantic clerical correspondents. Many were also privy to letters originally intended for other receivers, but passed along the ministerial network.[10] Only government officials, merchants, printers, and sailors approached their level of access to recent news, and each part of this corresponding elite depended on the others for letter-exchange. Information diffusion in the seventeenth century was a collaborative effort.

News-gathering was an important activity for New England clergy, as keeping abreast of secular and ecclesiastic events was crucial to their ministry and to their personal happiness. Centrally-located "brokers" enjoyed enhanced access to information, both written and oral, while hinterland correspondents depended on them for updates on the latest events and ideas. As I argued in chapter three, by the time information reached the last ears and eyes, it had passed through many re-tellings (oral and written). These "reporters" were vital to ensure information flowed smoothly, even as each hearer/reader/teller altered the final result, filtering and reshaping the information.

Some ministers, more than others, acted as primary sources of news. If they were not centrally-located, which would immediately credit them as informed, then they enjoyed considerable letter-exchange with correspondents in the information centers, such as Boston. Two events predating the Boston News-Letter -- King Philip's War (1676-1677) and the Assassination Plot against William III (1695) -- as reported by two ministers, Noah Newman and John Cotton, highlight the role of minister-as-news-correspondent.

While rural ministers generally depended on centrally-located brokers to supply information and assistance, news-worthy occurences also happened outside of Boston. Reporting events on the frontier inverted the traditonal broker-hinterland relationship. When pursuing the truth of "what happened," and replying to inquiries from the intellectual centers, distantly-settled ministers shared the prestige of metropolis-based brokers. Noah Newman's news-letters from Rehoboth about native raids on Medfield suggest that the hinterland network could supply news as effectively as did its Boston counterpart.

Newman's settlement in Rehoboth, in Plymouth Colony, and his contact with leading military officers informed and privileged his war correspondence. Rehoboth was the central rendez-vous for almost 700 Massachusetts Bay and Plymouth Colony troops called to fight against the combined Narragansett and Wampanoag forces under 'King Philip' in late 1675 and 1676.[11]

Philip's raids in 1675 against towns in Plymouth Colony, the Connecticut River valley, the Merrimac Valley, and Rhode Island were extremely successful, devastating settlements throughout New England. By February 1676, attacks on Massachusetts Bay towns such as Lancaster, Medfield, and Weymouth, continued Philip's encircling of Boston, bringing him within ten miles of the metropolis. Newman reported on the progress of King Philip's war in six letters written in Rehoboth and neighboring Taunton from December 1675 to August 1676. His concern for veracity, attention to chronology, and vivid detail preview published news-reporting in colonial New England.[12]

In a 1675 letter to John Cotton, his loyal correspondent, Newman acknowledged that his location enabled him to report on colony-wide events as he had never before been able to do:

> I call to returne your faithful & brotherly remembrance of me at Boston from whence I had the fullest & surest intelligence of the Northern war which now being come weest, by my present situation I consider my selfe to have an opportunity...of a retaliation.[13]

Based on personal conversations with Captain William Bradford, and letters shared by military officers, Newman reported the army's day-by-day movements and defense of Pawtuxet, Rhode Island in December 1675. Newman interviewed participants, read personal letters, and questioned the military postal rider, carefully correcting his report in a post-script when he received contradictory information.

Newman's news-gathering efforts logically accompanied his ministerial work. While visiting wounded soldiers in Rhode Island, he heard of an opportunity to travel to Narragansett where he received "particular intelligence." Newman promised Cotton he would verify his information: "I Looke every day & hour for certaine intelligence of things both at y^{e} Iland & Narrag: by some gone from us to visit them."[14] His occasional preaching to troops further increased his opportunities to gather information.

Cotton appreciated Newman's regular reports, and requested more specific news after hearing about the raid on Medfield on February 21, 1676. Newman's reply on March 14 reveals his increasing proficiency and eloquence as a news correspondent. Setting out time and circumstances, followed by vivid imagery, Newman described the early-morning attack on Medfield based on information gained from a visit to the devastated town. Interviewing Medfield's minister, John Wilson, Newman learned of the horror, and shared it with his correspondents. Although Wilson could not then tell Newman exactly how many inhabitants had died, he described the gruesome deaths of some for Newman's news-letter:

> Samuel Smiths wife being big wth child & another child in her arms was crossing over an open field to a Garison house & was over taken by the enemy & kild, & her child left alive, found standing by its dead mother where they thought it had stood near an hour[15]

While Newman certainly alluded to the providential causes of the war, that God's displeasure was evident in their suffering, his news-letters were remarkably free from moral judgement about either the native American participants or the Euroamerican settlers. He carefully recorded 'facts' about the raid, expecting that information to travel beyond his receiver. His reports often included long casualty lists, separated into towns. By naming the people from Marshfield, Duxbury, Sandwich, Barnstable, Yarmouth, Eastham, and Rehoboth who had died, Newman intended for Cotton to share the sad news with correspondents in those towns, which Cotton did, both orally and in writing.[16]

Cotton also broadcast Newman's reports to correspondents in Boston and Portsmouth, who shared it even further. Joshua Moody wrote to Cotton on April 1, 1676, thanking him for "y^{e} Intelligence":

> I have read it & showed it unto many who have pused it wth great Sympathy...If anything of like hath occurr among you for y^{e} future...your handing it to us w^{d} be matter of great Satisfaction y^{t} we might know things pticularly & truly. Reports are so many & various y^{t} we know n^{t} what to believe.

Newman's location privileged his news reports, and people settled far away from the frontier fighting appreciated his attention to detail, and spread his reports along the oral and written network.[17]

As his war correspondence with Noah Newman indicates, Plymouth's minister, John Cotton, often acted as a journalist, reporting information gathered from multiple sources. For example, in 1696, John Cotton sent his son, Rowland, a letter reporting recent European events and their ramifications for New England.[18] John Cotton's history of adultery, his location in Plymouth, and his limited publications afforded him little prestige within New England's ministerial community. However, his talents for news-gathering and information diffusion were remarkable. Trusted as a source, and looked to for news, Cotton's news-letters kept his community informed as effectively as "public prints" would.[19]

Demands for transatlantic news understandably accompanied New England's participation in King William's War, 1689-1697 (The War of the League of Augsburg). Each international ship's arrival promised updates on William's fight against Louis XIV's France, the exiled Catholic King James II of England, and the Jacobite peril throughout the British Isles. Word from New France centered on colonial fighting in Montreal, Port Royal, and Newfoundland, between French and English colonists and their respective native allies. Inter-colonial news focused on the ever-present native raids on New Hampshire, western Massachusetts, New York, and Connecticut, and on the increased attempts to fortify both the New England towns against French-allied native Americans, and the New England coast against French warships.[20]

Written in July 1696, Cotton's news-letter carefully laid out recent events based on his extensive news-gathering. A "Post" arriving from Boston, told him that ships were "seene in Ipswich Bay which hastened the Capt & his Souldiers to the Castle that evening, but they were only the mast Ships...who are arrived at Piscataqua." Cotton transcribed for his son a lengthy portion of a letter he had received from Cotton Mather, using quotation marks, with explicit attribution. Both Mather's and Cotton's intended audience is clear:

> Designing that my whole country shall have the story of the miraculous things (which are numerous) attending the defeat of the late invasion I must pray your patience & pardon that I cannot now recite the particulars. The miscarriage of the Plot has marvellously united the nation.

Mather, via Cotton, instructed New Englanders about the glorious events in the English Atlantic.[21]

Early in 1696, Jacobites, led by a fervent Scottish supporter of James II, George Barclay, hatched a plot to assassinate William III. The conspirators later planned to invade England and welcome the exiled Catholic James II back to the throne.[22] The original date for the assassination was February 15, 1696, but news of the conspiracy reached William's advisors, and the plotters were arrested and tried for treason. When William announced the plot to Parliament on February 24, members of Parliament, even those with flexible loyalties, demanded each member publicly recognize William's right to the throne, something many had hesitated to proclaim.[23] Cotton (and Mather) described Parliament's decision: "They enter into an Association to revenge K. William's death (if untimely) all the nation over."[24]

Cotton also quoted information Mather received about Boston's Benjamin Colman, acknowledging both Colman and Mather in the re-telling. Colman wrote, presumably to Mather, but possibly to someone else who shared the letter with Mather, describing his capture on the way to England by a French ship in the Atlantic: "his being taken & having lost soe much as his very manuscripts through the barbarous Rascality of a French Priest that was on board the Privateer that took him, I call it barbarous beacuse they stript him starke naked." Mather heard of Colman's ultimately safe arrival through yet another source: "Mr

Whittingham (who came over with Capt Gillam) says Mr Colman is well accepted in London."[25]

Although Mather enjoyed vast communications throughout the English Atlantic, he would not testify to the truth of his news about William III or Benjamin Colman. Mather warned Cotton of his doubts because he knew Cotton would broadcast the information, as Mather intended him to do. Simply by including Mather's statement, Cotton similarly warned his son, Rowland, in Mather's voice: "Doe not vouch all that is written to be absolutely true, allowance is to be given in telling a story, though I believe the main things are soe." However, Mather's doubts did not preclude his offering further service as a news correspondent: "If this account satisfy not as to the fullnesse please to give me more particular Articles of Inquiry & I shall be ready to give as speedy an answer as may."[26]

Plymouth's wing of the network gratefully received the news, extended an additional offer to obtain more information, and pledged to "maintain a good Correspondence with [Mather] on this account" so that he could remain current on international events. John Cotton then added news relevant to his son, and his son's community in Sandwich: thunder on Deer Island injured some inhabitants; a local sailor almost drowned when a mast-cord coiled around his waist, dragging him overboard; Cotton welcomed three babies into church fellowship and planned a church meeting; Marshfield declared their ordination day; a neighbor safely delivered a new daughter.[27]

John Cotton considered the letter urgent enough to instruct his daughter-in-law that if Rowland was still away in Yarmouth, she should instruct the bearer to take it to him there. He added a noteworthy request: "May it not be best for... the bearer to take the letter off you after you have read & sealed it again & carry it along to meet the owner that soe Yarmouth & Mr. Lathrop & Mr. Russell may have what is newes." Obviously, Mather's and Cotton's letters spread ever outward.[28]

The information chain in this letter, as in many others in this period, is remarkable. A careful accounting of the above letter from Mather to Cotton shows that Mather received information from four other letters at least, probably the London Gazette, a transatlantic traveler, and a ship captain returning from London. Cotton then added news learned from three visitors, two letters, and the courier. According to his instructions, the network extended to his daughter-in-law, his son, Barnstable's minister, Jonathan Russell, elder Lathrop, and their extended communities in Southeastern Massachusetts. Rowland's wife, Elizabeth Saltonstall Cotton, would surely share the news with her family and friends in Haverhill and New London, adding her own personal news.

Personal news-letters were works-in-progress, as each receiver along the network embellished and added to the news contained in it. This multivalent layering of information encouraged each reader/hearer to particpate in news-gathering and news-reporting. Far from distorting the resulting information, each retelling improved the facts with the writer's explicit and implicit interpretation. Receivers welcomed the resulting subjectivity because of their relationships with members of the network. Both veracity and subjectivity augmented the truth-claim of personal news-letters in the early eighteenth-century.

Questions of subjectivity and mediation complicate Newman's and Cotton's news-reports about King Philip's War and the Assasination Plot. Filtered through many re-tellings, personal news-letters within the ministerial community, even those shared with a much broader community, reflect the relationship between writers and receivers. This personal relationship fueled letter-exchange, and ultimately distinguished personal correspondence from published news-letters. The receiver, and the receiver's extended audience, trusted the information because it was subjective. Letters continued to provide this subjective analysis and emotional support, while newspapers increasingly took responsibility for covering most transatlantic and some colonial news.

Aside from the single edition Publick Occurrences, Both Forreign and Domestick printed in 1690 by Boston's Benjamin Harris, the Boston News-Letter was colonial North America's first newspaper. John Campbell began printing the Boston News-Letter in April 1704. The weekly News-Letter and many ministerial news-letters shared one purpose, to provide information and news about the English Atlantic world.[29] Campbell based the format and content of his newspaper on the London public prints which regularly flowed through his postal office, especially the London Gazette, begun in 1665. The News-Letter's circulation was small, approximately 250, and was addressed mostly to the corresponding elite who also exchanged the majority of letters -- merchants, government officials, and ministers.[30] Campbell's postmaster's job enhanced both his access to recent news, and his ability to distribute the printed news-sheets, which went by postal rider for free as long as he remained postmaster.[31] Receivers paid different subscription rates depending on location.

According to historian Charles Clark, Campbell's explicit intent in printing the News-Letter was to link "provincial Americans with the metropolitan center of their pan-Atlantic English world."[32] Like Campbell's earlier, handwritten news-letters, the News-Letter focused primarily on London's official news, and less on colonial events.[33] Campbell's decision to reprint mostly European news, avoiding local events, also eased relations between the press and local authorities. Writing about Boston news risked angering provincial officials, while ignoring the events avoided that risk.

Campbell also mimicked the layout of the Gazette, and presented news in order of significance, adhering to a chronological "thread of occurrences." Even when more recent events might have demanded immediate attention, Campbell usually continued each issue where the last left off, which eventually left him as far as thirteen months behind current information.[34] Official Royal proclamations and international documents led off, while transatlantic news, news from other colonies, some local Boston news, and advertisements followed. Just as scores of other personal correspondents did, Campbell copied a vast majority of the News-Letter's reports directly from other sources. He clearly favored the London Gazette, but he also transcribed news from the Monthly Mercury, the Flying Post, the Post Boy, the Post Man, and the Observator.[35]

Campbell recognized that many of his readers in New England had access to the same news he reported, either by subscribing to the same English newspapers, or through transatlantic letter-exchange. He admitted his lack of exclusivity in the News-Letter just one year after he began publishing, but argued that his news would be more accurate, and would reach a broader audience:

> All which Intelligence, tho' some few Gentlemen and Merchants might have all or some part thereof, yet for the most part the people in general, in this and the Neighbouring Provinces, have it not, and what they have, variously, and often falsely reported.

Since Campbell could not offer exclusive information, he claimed his news was more accurate.[36]

That Campbell and personal news-letter writers wrote about the same events should not have surprised him, considering their news-gathering techniques paralleled his own. He garnered information from wandering Boston's docks and questioning recently-arrived sailors and travellers, he combed the foreign newspapers which filled his mail bag, he met with important colonial officials and maritime officers, he spoke with local residents who came to his office to pick up mail, and he received personal news-letters from other postmen in colonial ports.[37]

Like the ministerial correspondents, he had difficulties confirming the validity of his reports. Campbell commiserated with his readers about the problems of uncovering the truth of an event before publishing it. He felt free to share his concerns about the truth of his stories because he did not hold himself to higher standards of veracity. After correcting some false information which he had published earlier, he reminded his reader-correspondents that they should understand his predicament:

> Our *News-Letter* also will, I hope sufficiently preserve its Reputation, if any Paragraph of it, not setting a thing in all its *true light*, shall in one weeks time supply all that is defective, and perhaps there are a few Readers, but what have themselves now & then told a Story that needed a further *Elucidation*.

By putting himself in the same category as 'amateur' news-gatherers, Campbell suggested that the Boston News-Letter was not far removed from the news-letters they exchanged personally.[38]

On at least one occasion, Campbell received credit for correcting false reports, another one of the stated goals of the Boston News-Letter. In February 1723, the minister in Salisbury, Massachusetts, Caleb Cushing, wrote to Stephen Sewall in Salem, confirming the newspaper's accuracy and helpfulness in quieting rumors about someone's death after the body was found floating in a river. Sewall wrote to Cushing requesting more information in January because he had heard rumors of foul play, to which Cushing replied: "y^{e} News letter I presume has informed you now he was found wth Clothes Money &c w^{ch} is sufficient to Correct those false reports... w^{ch} run about y^{e} Maner of his death."[39]

However, even by eighteenth-century standards, John Campbell did not enjoy 'professional' status as a newswriter because he did not provide superior information, based on his news-gathering, or news-reporting skills.[40] In many ways, John Campbell was simply another correspondent who enjoyed access to international news because of his location in metropolitan Boston and his extensive letter-exchange network. Although circulation remained small, his audience was larger and more immediate than any other New England letter-writer, Cotton Mather included. He corresponded with a large number of New England writers and receivers through the Boston News-Letter's printed sheets. The similarities between Campbell's News-Letter and the clerical correspondents' news-letters encouraged the ministers to accept published news sources.

Even before 1704, occasional copies of English newspapers flowed along the ministerial network as letter-writers forwarded already-read copies, or sent fresh editions specifically intended for the receiver. Like postmaster/editor John Campbell, New England correspondents particularly trusted the London Gazette for international news. Richard Blinman, in Bristol, England, and Nathaniel Mather, in Dublin, Ireland, both sent Increase Mather copies of the London Gazette in the 1670s.[41] John Richards, a colonial agent in London in the 1680s, credited the London Gazette as "the best for foreign intelligence" when he suggested that Increase Mather read the governor's copies, knowing he would "readily give ... perusal."[42] Editions of the Gazette also travelled beyond the intellectual centers.[43] Exeter's John Cotton, writing from Plymouth to his father in Barnstable in 1690, quoted the Gazette regarding the safe arrival of New England's agents, and updating him on some international news.[44]

Newspapers generally travelled from Boston outward to the hinterland along the same letter-exchange network that had kept New Englanders informed throughout the seventeenth century. For example, Samuel Sewall frequently enclosed copies of the Boston News-Letter, the Boston Gazette beginning in 1719, and the New-England Weekly Journal, beginning in 1727, in his personal correspondence. Sewall's acquired habit of enclosing printed news sources reflects the easy transition which colonial newspapers made into the communication culture of early New England.

Sewall's role as information broker pre-dated the Boston News-Letter. For example, in 1689, Sewall apologized to Israel Chauncey, Stratford, Connecticut's minister, for the dearth of news in his letter, but he was away, so had "no late News to acquaint you with."[45] Sewall had traditionally spread information through his network of correspondents, as he did in a 1698 letter to John Wise, minister at Ipswich. Along with some encouragement about scholarship in New England, he provided some recent news "by Sea": the Earl of Bellomont arrived to serve as the Royal Governor of New England; the sufferings of Geneva protestants continued; the state of Greek protestants declined.[46]

For Sewall, newspapers simply became another enclosure, along with printed tracts, sermons, and almanacs. After the Boston News-Letter began, Sewall allowed the enclosed newspapers to report the relevant news, while he simply added editorial comment and local/familial news. By 1712, Sewall's news-gathering efforts had changed dramatically because of the influence of newspapers. His letter that year to Edward Taylor, a minister in Westfield and his former classmate at Harvard, illuminates the effect the newspapers had on his personal correspondence. While he included some news from England and Scotland, he confessed to Taylor that he had little that was novel: "I understand you have the News-Letters at Westfield, and so I can send you little News."[47]

Throughout his letter-book, Sewall referred to the ministers to whom he sent Boston's newspapers. Often he sent three or four editions at a time, and forwarded several extra copies for his receivers to distribute. Sewall favored many hinterland ministers with public prints: James Bailey in Roxbury, Massachsetts; Nathaniel Gookin in Hampton, New Hampshire; Moses Hale in Chester, New Hampshire; Josiah Marshall in Falmouth, Massachusetts; Experience Mayhew and Nathaniel Bassett on Martha's Vineyard; Samuel Moody in York, Maine; Moses Noyes in Lyme, Connecticut; Gurdon Saltonstall in New London, Connecticut; Seth Shove in Danbury, Connecticut; Edward Taylor in Westfield, Massachusetts; John Williams in Deerfield, Massachusetts; and Timothy Woodbridge in Hartford, Connecticut.[48]

Sewall's changing habits were typical of the corresponding elite. Throughout the period from 1704 to the 1720s, letter-writers increasingly allowed the News-Letter to report the news, only adding limited information in the accompanying handwritten letters. This replacement occurred gradually for most correspondents. Letter writers truncated their news reports first, then eliminated the strict listing of events altogether. For example, Nathaniel Cotton, studying at Harvard in 1714, sent his father, Rowland Cotton, a quick accounting of recent occurrances in Boston based on his reading of the Boston News-Letter: "The King & his son were to receive their dignitaries on the same day -- the King to be crowned & his son to be installed the Prince of Wales -- as we are informed by this weeks Newsletter."[49]

Two years later, Boston's John Legg simply assumed Rowland Cotton would already know the news, because he received the newspaper. Therefore, Legg did not repeat it: "As for news we have had none later than 3 months from England. You'd meet with it in the newsletters that go to you per the conveyance."[50] By 1725, Boston's New Brick Church minister William Waldron succinctly testified to the increasing prestige newspapers enjoyed in a letter to his brother in Portsmouth, New Hampshire: "My Letter will Serve for Little More than a Cover for yo^{r} N^{s}Papers to Day."[51]

Believing the newspapers to be accurate most of the time, New England's ministers began to simply add editorial comment and analysis in their personal letters. A trusted correspondent's subjective opinion enhanced the news reports already received through other means. As they had done with personal letters, newspaper-readers analyzed the outcomes and implications of reported news for themselves, their communities, and their fellow ministers in their letters to each other. The published prints could supply the facts, the attached letter would add first-person interpretation. For a brief period in 1719, Campbell even offered to print the News-Letter on a full sheet of paper, instead of the customary half-sheet, so that correspondents could write on the blank half, and mail the newspaper/letter as if it were a single letter.[52] This practice also echoes the multi-level news-gathering in pre-newspaper personal correspondence, further evidence of the overlap between the two forms of communication.

Like shared letters, newspapers were mediated objects in the letter-exchange network. Even the simple act of enclosing a copy of the Boston News-Letter, the Boston Gazette, or the New-England Courant legitimized the newspaper as a source. By sharing it, the sender implicitly validated the paper's reporting. Thomas Prince, minister at Boston's Old South Church, used the newsletter as a record of events, both secular and ecclesiastic, when writing to others and when noting events in his diary. For example, after attending a church gathering ceremony for the new West Church in Boston in 1737, Prince recorded the day's happenings in his diary:

> At 3 I met at Hugh Hall's Esq, wth R M^{r} Foxcroft; w^{r} I Pray'd R M^{r} Foxcroft Preached...yn I read y^{e} cov^{t}, to w^{c} 17 Lift up yr Hands & subscrib'd: R M^{r} Foxcroft Pray'd:

> & aft^r sm Discourse, I gave y^e Bless^g, & yn M^r Foxcroft
> & I left ym. See y^e true acc^t in y^e Boston News Letter
> Jan 6.

Evidently, Prince kept back copies of the News-Letter for easy referral.[53]

The News-Letter's description of the church covenanting was extensive, and intended to familiarize transatlantic readers with New England church polity: "Because the Method of gathering such Churches here, may not be known abroad; we shall give the Publick a brief Account of this particular Transaction."[54] Prince's allusion to the News-Letter provided an easy shorthand -- the newspaper's account was fuller than his own -- and suggests that Prince trusted the News-Letter's interpretation of the covenanting as a "true acc^t."

Ministerial mediation of the new "public" news-sources occurred on other levels as well. Correspondents occasionally prescribed the way a receiver should interpret the enclosed paper. For example, Bejamin Colman wrote to Stephen Sewall, a judge in Salem, in 1712, preparing him for the enclosed newspaper, even directing the order in which he read it: "I enclose the News-paper: Her Maj^ys Care & Zeal in the first article will please you: y^e New-York is also particular."[55]

Therefore, while most letter-writers reported less and less colonial and transatlantic news, they continued to filter and shape the news they shared, as they had always done through personal letter-exchange. Their participation in news-gathering did not necessarily decrease (forwarding the newspaper was itself a form of gathering news), but rather the focus of their news reporting changed. Ministers continued to report the local and familial news with which the newspapers were understandably unconcerned. Filling in the newspaper gaps, writers added late-breaking information learned orally, or through personal correspondence. In 1725, Samuel Sewall embellished enclosed newspapers with oral updates for his ministerial correspondent, Timothy Woodbridge:

> Cousin William Gerrish just now comes in, and tells me that Capt. Lovell of Dunstable came up with Ten Indian Men last Satterday night (that stormy night) and kill'd them all. Took Ten Guns, Twenty pair of Snow-Shoes, and some Bever.

Sewall's simple addition to the newspaper enclosed in his letter to Woodbridge indicates how easily public prints fit with personal correspondence.[56] The comfortable co-existence of newspapers and ministerial letters followed logically because the two forms shared many characteristics and readers. New England ministers were generally nonplussed by the newspapers' arrival, welcoming them into long-standing letter-exchange patterns.

Cotton Mather serves as a powerful, and extremely vocal, exception to this thesis of easy acceptance. Mather's vociferous condemnation of the Boston News-Letter and, later, of the New-England Courant distinguish him from his fellow New England clergy. In personal letters to friends, Mather claimed that he disliked the newspapers because of their inaccurate facts, outdated reports, and bias against the congregational clergy. However, moving beyond Mather's explicit protests reveals that along with his stated reasons, Mather feared losing the exclusivity, attendant prestige, and editorial control he once commanded over information diffusion. More than any of his colleagues, Mather understoood the potential power of the new communication media, and tried to gain some control over it.

The newspapers increasingly adopted the news-gathering role that Mather had once performed. In 1715, he complained to Hartford's minister Timothy Woodbridge about his diminishing role as an information conduit:

> It must be complained That y^{e} communication we have had...has been so slender as to leave us saying very little, but what you have in the public News-Letter, and what every body has heard of.

He was painfully aware that his usually abundant letter-exchange network increasingly disappointed him.[57]

Thanks to his vast communication network, Cotton Mather had been privy to a huge amount of information before almost anyone else had been.[58] The Boston News-Letter threatened to end that exclusivity. Although the News-Letter's speed in reporting events often lagged behind Mather's, he resented even the possibility that the News-Letter would out-inform him. Elitism influenced his opinion of the public prints. The "common News-Writers," as he referred to them in a letter to Timothy Woodbridge, were simply not worthy to spread the news.[59]

Above all else Mather wanted his news to be novel. Fiercely defending his exclusivity, Mather wrote to Gurdon Saltonstall in 1720, but included no international news: "When I have a more perfect Intelligence, of what you can hear from no body else a communication of it shall be endeavoured."[60] Ever fearful of appearing redundant, Mather vowed to John Winthrop in 1716 that he would never "insert anything that you may expect to find among the antiquities of our Boston News-Letter."[61] Considering that by 1716 the News-Letter was almost a year behind events in England, Mather's assessment of Campbell's news as "antiquities" seems almost justified, were it not so steeped in his injured pride.

His attack on the Boston News-Letter also stemmed from his desire for editorial control. Mather clearly disagreed with what the News-Letter covered, describing it to his friend Nehemiah Hobart as early as 1706 as a "thin sort of Diet."[62] Mather resented two specific characteristics of the News-Letter: it did not print enough news about his allies, and it printed only positive news about his enemies. For example, in a 1707 letter to his friend, John Winthrop in New London, Mather chastized the newspaper for insufficient coverage of Governor John Winthrop's death a few weeks earlier. Mather revealed both his distaste for Campbell's editorial policy when covering Mather-friends, and his resolve to personally correct the News-Letter's failings:

> Our paltry News-Letter, when it reports the Death of that meritorious Gentleman, takes care, that not so much as One Honorable Word shall be spoken of him

Mather committed himself to publishing his own funeral memorial -- a news-letter of his own -- to send to 200 friends in Old and New England, Connecticut officials and ministerial colleagues, to substitute for Campbell's failure.[63]

Mather's single-minded resolve to correct the "filthy and foolish *News-Letter*," seems less egotistical when placed in the context of press-government relations in colonial Boston. John Campbell's friendship with Joseph Dudley, the Royal Governor from 1702 to 1715, discouraged any criticism of Dudley's contentious and unpopular administration in the Boston News-Letter. Campbell neglected to cover the most news-worthy events in Boston during this period because they usually reflected badly on Dudley, and Dudley's associates. For example, hotly debated issues of taxation, paper currency, the proposal of a private bank, and popular annoyance with increasing royal power appear no where in the Boston News-Letter's local coverage.

The Governor's developing Anglicanism, which further outraged Mather, prevented Campbell from covering continuing debate between Congregationalists and Anglicans. Dudley's own occasionally questionable behavior, including illegal trade with French enemies in Quebec, a bloody brawl with two local farmers in the streets of Boston, and a scandalous affair between Dudley's business partner, Arthur Lawson, and a married woman, escaped newspaper scrutiny as well.[64] Campbell's relationship with Dudley led to the paper's unflagging support of a very unpopular Governor, and ensured Mather's condemnation of the News-Letter as a "weekly piece of Blockheadism."[65]

Campbell's particular editorial slant on New England society explains a good deal of Mather's animosity towards the News-Letter. The fact that the newspaper was published, sold, and distributed publicly, bothered him less than what Campbell chose to report and how he chose to report it. This is crucial to understanding how Mather increasingly accepted Boston's growing newspaper selection: the Boston Gazette beginning in 1719, and the New-England Weekly Journal beginning in 1727.

Ironically, it was another newspaper's vociferous attack on Mather that led to Mather's ultimately accepting the new media. The newspaper war surrounding Mather's proposal for smallpox innoculation in 1721 encouraged Mather to use a means he once despised to defend himself, and to promote a life-saving medical innovation. The smallpox epidemic of 1721-1722 infected over half of Boston's inhabitants, killing over eight hundred. Enlisting the help of Dr. Zabdiel Boylston, Mather promoted an experimental method of innoculation which he learned from correspondents in England, and his African slave. While Mather's ministerial colleagues generally supported innoculation, most Bostonians were outraged that Mather proposed injecting a person with smallpox puss. Appointing themselves representatives of a terrified populace, the anti-innoculation physicians in Boston spearheaded the battle against Mather, and used the newly-established New-England Courant to do so.

James Franklin began publishing the New-England Courant specifically to denigrate Mather and his fellow pro-innoculation clergy. Aside from believing innoculation dangerous, the Courant's writers criticized the New England clergy for meddling in medical concerns, and questioned traditional clerical authority.[66] A theological battle further fueled the newspaper debate -- most of the pro-innoculation writers were Congregationalists and Presbyterians, while most of the anti-innoculation writers were Anglicans.[67] John Checkley, a leading Anglican and Tory, proclaimed on the first page of the first edition of the Courant that "the chief design of the *New-England Courant* is to oppose the doubtful and dangerous practice of innoculating."[68]

Mather had no choice but to defend himself in the public prints. Grudgingly, he admitted that the ultimate power of the newspapers lay in their ability to diffuse information. He confided in his diary in 1721 that he would use that increasing power to his advantage: "I may propose some agreeable Pasages, to be inserted in the *News-Letters*, which may have a Notable Tendancy to correct and restrain the Epidemical Follies of the Town."[69] Along with enlisting the help of fellow clergy through his letter-exchange network, Mather published information in both the Boston Gazette and the Boston New-Letter. Benjamin Colman, along with fellow-clergymen Increase Mather, John Webb, Thomas Prince, and William Cooper also wrote articles for the Boston Gazette answering the Courant's criticism against innoculation.[70]

Cotton Mather's reluctant commitment to use the newspapers reveals how powerful a medium they had become by 1721. The ministers' embrace of early colonial newspapers eventually translated into the development of their own printed news source in 1727 -- the New-England Weekly Journal. Published by proministerial, pro-innoculation printers Samuel Kneeland and Timothy Green, the Weekly Journal blended the ministers' traditional letter-exchange habits and information-diffusion networks with the more recently-arrived published newspaper format. Three Harvard graduates with strong clerical ties -- Thomas Prince of Boston's Old South Church, the poet-minister Mather Byles, and Cambridge schoolmaster Samuel Danforth -- served as the paper's main contributors and editors.[71]

The Weekly Journal's statement of intent reveals its clerical focus, and its debts to seventeenth-century ministerial letter-exchange patterns. The first edition of the paper on March 20, 1727 outlined its purpose and issued a call to correspondents. The Journal's editors promised *"with Fidelity and Method, to Entertain the Publick every* Monday *with a Collection of the most Remarkable Occurrences of Europe"* and the English Atlantic that were *"profitable & entertaining both to the Christian and Historian."* Reader/Correspondents would act as the news-gatherers:

> *And to render this Paper more acceptable to its Readers, immediate care will be taken (and a considerable progress is herein already made) to settle a Correspondence with the most knowing and ingenious Gentlemen in the several noted Towns in this and the Neighbor-Provinces, who may take particular Care seasonably to Collect and send what may be Remarkable...worthy of the Publick View; whether of Remarkable Judgements, or Singular Mercies, more private or publick; Preservation & Deliverances by Sea or Land.*

The editors' advertisement for correspondents merely formalized a pratcice which ministers enjoyed long before colonial public prints arrived in New England.[72]

The Weekly Journal's call to the members of the corresponding elite, who had always written news-letters, reveals how deeply rooted early New England newspapers were in earlier letter-exchange habits, and how completely the two media had merged in news-gathering in 1727. Thomas Prince already enjoyed an extensive letter-writing network, as he boasted in the above call to readers, and his newspaper depended on both rural and metropolitan correspondents for news. The Weekly Journal was merely an institutional elaboration on letter-sharing, but had far-reaching consequences for personal correspondence. The formal, and self-proclaimed "public" nature of the Weekly Journal's information diffusion marks the final transition between personal news-letters and printed news.

Despite the increasing power of published news sources in early New England after 1704, letters remained the best way to maintain personal relationships and a learned ministerial community across distances. While newspapers supplanted letters for news-reporting, correspondence still satisfied vital emotional and psychological needs. Personal letters also gave meaning to the information displayed in the newspapers, adding subjective interpretation and comment on recent events. As James Noyes reminded his son in the letter which opened this chapter, letters were more "welcome" than the news print, even as letters became less informative, and certainly less novel regarding recent events, than the newspapers. Charles Clark suggests that even after the mid-eighteenth century, newspapers still acted as "extensions and reinforcers of the oral culture rather than substitutes for it."[73] The eighteenth-century communication world allowed both letters and newspapers to flourish, and even to inform each other. Newspapers never *replaced* written and oral information diffusion, but the public prints increasingly supplied the base sequence of events for that written and oral elaboration, eventually marginalizing ministers in the news-gathering world.

[1] #1014 Rev. James Noyes to Rev. Joseph Noyes, 14-20 December 1715, Quincy/Wendall/Holmes/Upham Collection (reel 20), MHS. The first number within each note refers to my own numbering system, and does not reflect the cataloguing of the institution which holds the document.

[2] Boston News-Letter, Nos 604-607: 7-14 November, 14-21 November, 21-28 November, 28-5 December, 1715.

[3] For a discussion of ministerial letter-exchange patterns and habits, see Sheila McIntyre, "'This Loving Correspondency': New England Ministerial Communication and Association, 1670-1730," Ph.D. dissertation, Boston University, 1996.

[4] Richard Brown argues that after the Revolution of 1776, ministers lost prestige within the community as they lost control over information diffusion, in part due to newspapers: "Where they had once been central figures in New England's rural communication network, screening and spreading a wide spectrum of secular as well as religious information from their unique position of parish eminence, now they became denominational partisans and pastors to their parishes in a restricted sense." "Spreading the Word: Rural Clergymen and the Communication Network of 18th-Century New England," MHS, Proceedings 94 (1982), 12; I hesitate to suggest this loss of power began as early as 1704, but I cannot deny the real effect newspapers had on letter-exchange patterns.

[5] Nord, "Teleology and News," 32.

[6] Clark argues that John Campbell's role as simple intelligencer changed into newspaper man when he became one "who creates, produces, and markets a product." Like the Boston News-Letter, printed sermons, tracts, and wonder tales, were "aimed at a readership that was partially anonymous and located principally in or around the publisher's own city." Public Prints, 78-79.

[7] John Campbell, the BNL's publisher included two stories that turned out to be hoaxes. While he later exposed the hoaxes, he did not apologize. Charles Clark, The Public Prints: The Newspaper in Anglo-American Culture, 1665-1740 (New York, 1994), 91.

[8] For evidence of letter-sharing, see Chapter three; For some discussion of historical concepts of timeliness, see Ian K. Steele, "Time, Communication and Society: The English Atlantic, 1702," Journal of American Studies VIII (1974), 1-21.

[9] Nord, "Teleology and News," 26.

[10] "The Clergy occupied a special place in New England's communications system and exercised a significant influence on the flow of information into and within the community." Richard D. Brown, "Spreading the Word: Rural Clergymen and the Communication Network of 18th-Century New England," MHS, Proceedings 94 (1982), 1-14; Francis J. Bremer, "Increase Mather's Friends: The Trans-Atlantic Congregational Network of the Seventeenth Century," AAS, Proceedings 94 (1984), 59-96.

[11] Richard L. Bowen, Early Rehoboth (Rehoboth, 1946), 39-57; Ian K. Steele, Warpaths: Invasions of North America (New York, 1994), 99-109.

[12] Michael Schudson suggests that "'news' itself was invented in the Jacksonian era," because there was no concept of "objectivity" before then. But such a narrow definition of "news" is entirely unhelpful. Schudson, Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers (New York, 1978); Dan Schiller, Objectivity in the News (Philadelphia, 1981).

[13] #424 Rev. Noah Newman to Rev. John Cotton (1640-99), 16 December 1675, Curwen Family Papers, AAS.

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[14] #420 Rev. Noah Newman to Rev. John Cotton (1640-99), 10 January 1675/6, Curwen Family Papers, AAS.

[15] #426 Rev. Noah Newman to Rev. John Cotton (1640-99), 14 March 1676, Curwen Family Papers, AAS.

[16] #427 Rev. Noah Newman to Rev. John Cotton (1640-99), 27 March 1676, Curwen Family Papers, AAS. Cotton added a postscript to Newman's letter which updated the casualty lists for himself and his network.

[17] #429 Rev. Joshua Moody to Rev. John Cotton (1640-99), 1 April 1676, Curwen Family Papers, AAS.

[18] #975 Rev. John Cotton (1640-99) to Rev. Rowland Cotton, 27 July 1696, Cotton Family Papers, MHS.

[19] See John Cotton's correspondence web and chart in the appendix.

[20] Philip Haffenden, New England the English Nation, 1689-1713 (Oxford, 1974), 72-119; Tim Harris, Politics Under the Later Stuarts: Party Conflict in a Divided Society (London, 1993), 208-33; Richard Johnson, Adjustment to Empire: The New England Colonies, 1675-1715 (Rutgers, 1981), 242-305; J.R. Jones, Country and Court: England, 1658-1714 (Cambridge, 1978), 256-301; David Ogg, England in the Reigns of James II and William III (Oxford, 1955), 281-439.

[21] Historians agree with Mather's assessment that the defeat of the Plot united England in support of William III: Ogg, England in the Reigns of James II and William III, 427-28; Jones, Country and Court, 274-75.

[22] The relationship between the Assassination Plot and the planned invasion remains questionable: Paul Hopkins suggests the two plots were unrelated: "Sham Plots and Real Plots in the 1690s," Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism, 1689-1759 (Edinburgh, 1982), 101; However, J.R. Jones argues that the invasion was planned to coincide with confusion over William's murder, Country and Court, 274.

[23] J.R. Jones, Country and Court, 274-75.

[24] #975 Rev. John Cotton (1640-99) to Rev. Rowland Cotton, 27 July 1696, Cotton Family Papers, MHS.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Clark, Public Prints, 77-102.

[30] Clark, Public Prints, 82.

[31] Clark, Public Prints, 87; Richard B. Kielbowicz, News in the Mail: The Press, the Post Office & Public Information, 1700-1860s (New York, 1989).

[32] Clark, Public Prints, 79.

[33] Campbell's 21 handwritten news-letters to the Winthrop family from 1666-1703 are in MHS Proceedings, XII (1871-75), 419-27 and IX (1866-67), 485-501.

[34] Clark, Public Prints, 95-101.

[35] Clark, Public Prints, 96-97.

[36] Boston News-Letter, 30 April 1705.

[37] Clarke, Public Prints, 89-91, 95-96; Sidney Kobre, Foundations of American Journalism (Tallahassee, 1958), 37.

[38] Boston News-Letter, 5 November 1705; Clarke agrees with this assessment: "he did not think of himself in any way set apart from the rest of the community with regard to his ability or responsibility in handling information." Public Prints, 92.

[39] #2081 Rev. Caleb Cushing & Capt William Bradbury to Stephen Sewall, 1 February 1722/23, Curwen Family Papers, AAS.

[40] Clark agrees: "Campbell had no such notion of his own qualifications, nor did any such idea of professionalism in journalism appear for at least a century." Public Prints, 92.

[41] #180 Richard Blinman to Rev Increase Mather, 1678 April 8/18, MHS, Collections, 4th Ser., VIII (1868), 330-33; #74 Rev. Nathaniel Mather to Rev. Increase Mather, 31 December 1679, MHS, Collections, 4th Ser., VIII (1868), 22-28.

[42] #281 John Richards to Rev. Increase Mather, 20 April 1683, MHS, Collections, 4th Ser., VIII (1868), 500-502.

[43] Even after New England had her own newspapers, Jeremiah Dummer, New England's agent in London, regularly sent Timothy Woodbridge copies of the London Gazette, as well as the Monthly Mercury, and the Flying Post, both published in London. #1089 Jeremiah Dummer to Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, 21 February 1716/17, H.H. Edes Papers, MHS; #1093 Jeremiah Dummer to Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, 18 April 1722, H.H. Edes Papers, MHS; #1094 Jeremiah Dummer to Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, 3 June 1722, H.H. Edes Papers, MHS; #1101 Jeremiah Dummer to Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, 25 March 1725, H.H. Edes Papers, MHS.

[44] #452 Rev. John Cotton (1661-1706) to Rev. John Cotton (1640-99), 5 August 1690, Curwen Family Papers, AAS.

[45] #2227 Samuel Sewall to Rev. Israel Chauncey, 25 December 1689, Samuel Sewall Letter Book, MHS, Collections, 6th Ser., I (1868), 93.

[46] #2239 Samuel Sewall to Rev. John Wise, 12 April 1698, Samuel Sewall Letter Book, MHS, Collections, 6th Ser., I (1868), 196-98.

[47] #605 Samuel Sewall to Rev. Edward Taylor, 14 June 1712, Miscellaneous Bound Collection, MHS.

[48] "Letter Book of Samuel Sewall," 2 vols., MHS, Collections 6th Ser., I (1886) (Numbers in parentheses refer to volume and page number.) #2224 (I:14), #2269 (I:330); #2270 (I:340), #2274 (I:372), #2296 (I:396), #2303 (I:408), #2314 (II:8), #2322 (II:31), #2332 (II:48), #2340 (II:70), #2343 (II:80), #2386 (II:175), #2387 (II:175), #2392 (II:191), #2402 (II:216), #2405 (II:227), #2407 (II:232), #2408 (II:232), #2410 (II:234), #2417 (II:249), #2424 (II:267), #2425 (II:267).

[49] #986 (Rev.) Nathaniel Cotton to Rev. Rowland Cotton, 16 November 1714, Cotton Family Papers, MHS.

[50] #639 John Legg to Rev. Rowland Cotton, 1716, Miscellaneous Bound Collection, MHS; Rowland Cotton definitely subscribed to at least the BNL. See discussion about lost newsletters in: #615 Rev Josiah Cotton (1680-1756) to Rev. Rowland Cotton, 26 August 1713, Miscellaneous Bound Collection, MHS; #631 Rev. Josiah Cotton (1680-1756) to Rev. Rowland Cotton, 13 November 1714, Miscellaneous Bound, MHS.

[51] #719 Rev. William Waldron to Richard Waldron, 18 October 1725, Miscellaneous Bound Collection, MHS.

[52] Clark, Public Prints, 108. Campbell's offer occurred during a debate with William Brooker, who assumed Campbell's job as postmaster, and began publishing the Boston Gazette shortly thereafter in 1719. Brooker refused to send Campbell's News-Letter without postage, a privilege Campbell enjoyed when he was postmaster. So Campbell's offer to allow space for personal correspondence does not necessarily mean that he encouraged personal embellishment of his newspaper, just that he wanted as large a circulation as possible.

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[53] "Diary of Reverend Thomas Prince, 1737," Colonial Society of Massachusetts, Transactions 19 (1916-17), 335.

[54] Boston News-Letter, 6 January 1737, 2.

[55] #2034 Rev. Benjamin Colman to Stephen Sewall, 1 September 1712, Curwen Family Papers, AAS.

[56] #2388 Samuel Sewall to Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, 25 February 1724/5, Letter Book of Samuel Sewall, MHS, Collections, 6th Ser., I (1886), 182-83.

[57] #1087 Rev. Cotton Mather to Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, 20 January 1714/15, H.H. Edes Papers, MHS.

[58] See Cotton Mather's correspondence map and chart in the appendix.

[59] #1087 Rev. Cotton Mather to Rev. Timothy Woodbridge, 20 January 1714/15, H.H. Edes Papers, MHS.

[60] #2183 Rev Cotton Mather to Rev/Gov Gurdon Saltonstall, 24 October 1720, Kenneth Silverman Papers, MHS.

[61] #230 Rev. Cotton Mather to John Winthrop, 15 October 1716, MHS, Collections, 4th Ser., VIII (1868), 429-30.

[62] #465 Rev. Cotton Mather to Rev. Nehemiah Hobart, 30 January 1705/6, Curwen Family Papers, AAS.

[63] #221 Rev. Cotton Mather to John Winthrop, 16 December 1707, MHS, Collections, 4th Ser., VIII (1868), 405-407.

[64] G.B. Warden, Boston, 1689-1776 (Boston, 1970), 62-66.

[65] #224 Rev. Cotton Mather to Waitstill Winthrop, 6 October 1712, MHS, Collections, 4th Ser., VIII (1868), 410-12; Michael G. Hall, The Last American Puritan: The Life of Increase Mather (Middletown, CT, 1988), 306-310, 319-323; W. David Sloan and Julie Hedgepeth Williams, The Early American Press, 1690-1783 (Westport, CT, 1994), 19-21.

[66] Clark, Public Prints, 123-40.

[67] W. David Sloan, "The New England Courant: Voice of Anglicanism," American Journalism VII (1991), 108-141; While James Franklin was not Anglican, most of the Courant's writers were.

[68] New-England Courant, 21 August 1721, 1.

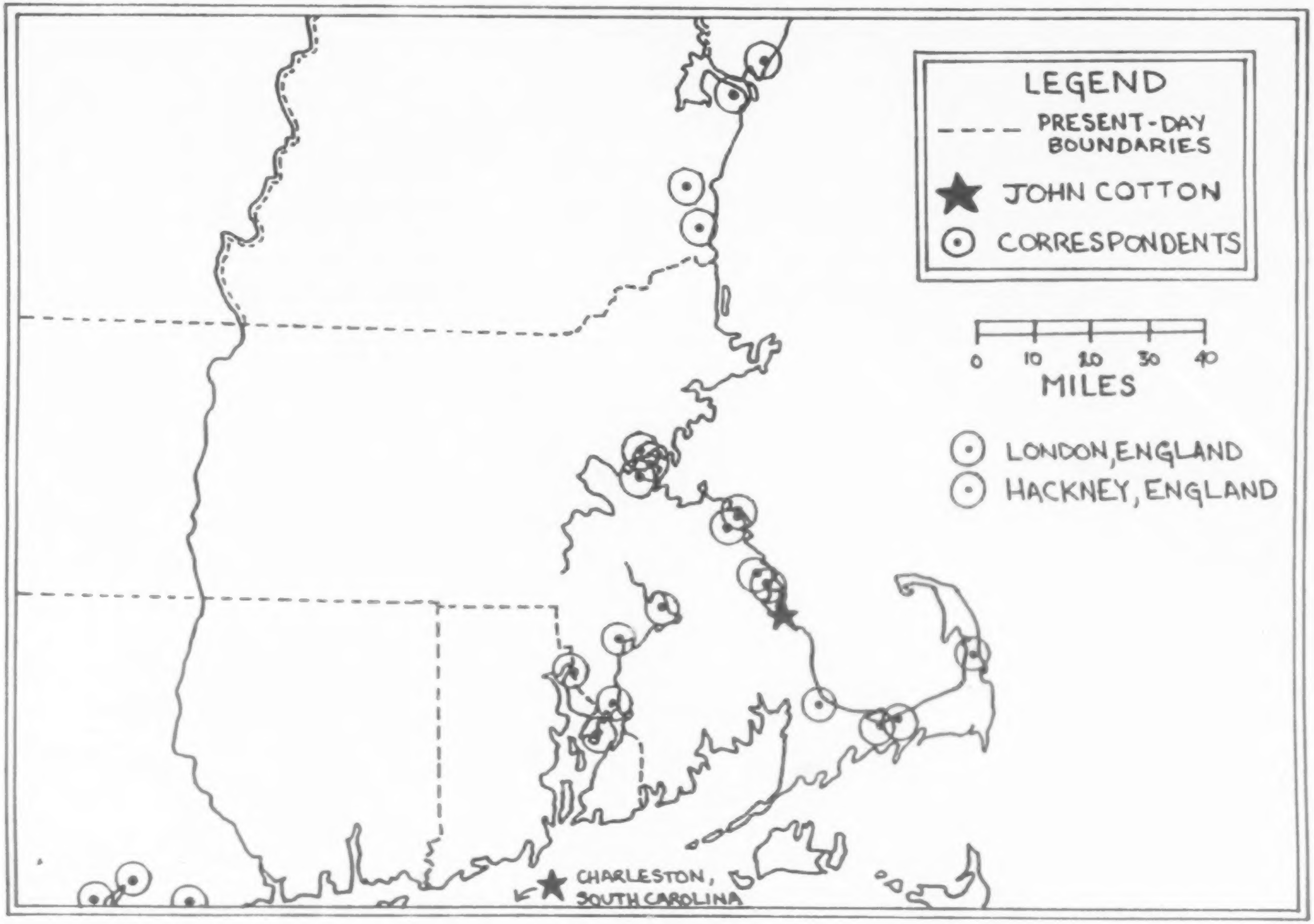
[69] "Diary of Cotton Mather, 1709-1724," MHS, Collections, 7th Ser., VIII (1912), 638; see also, 658.

[70] Boston News-Letter, 24 July 1721.

[71] Clark, Public Prints, 143-53; Sloan and Williams, The Early American Press, 30-32.

[72] New-England Weekly Journal, un-numbered first edition, 20 March 1727.

[73] Charles Clark, "The Newspapers of Provincial America," AAS, Proceedings, 100 (1991), 384.


LEGEND
---- PRESENT-DAY BOUNDARIES
★ JOHN COTTON
⊙ CORRESPONDENTS
0 10 20 30 40
MILES
⊙ LONDON, ENGLAND
⊙ HACKNEY, ENGLAND
★ CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA

Correspondence Web

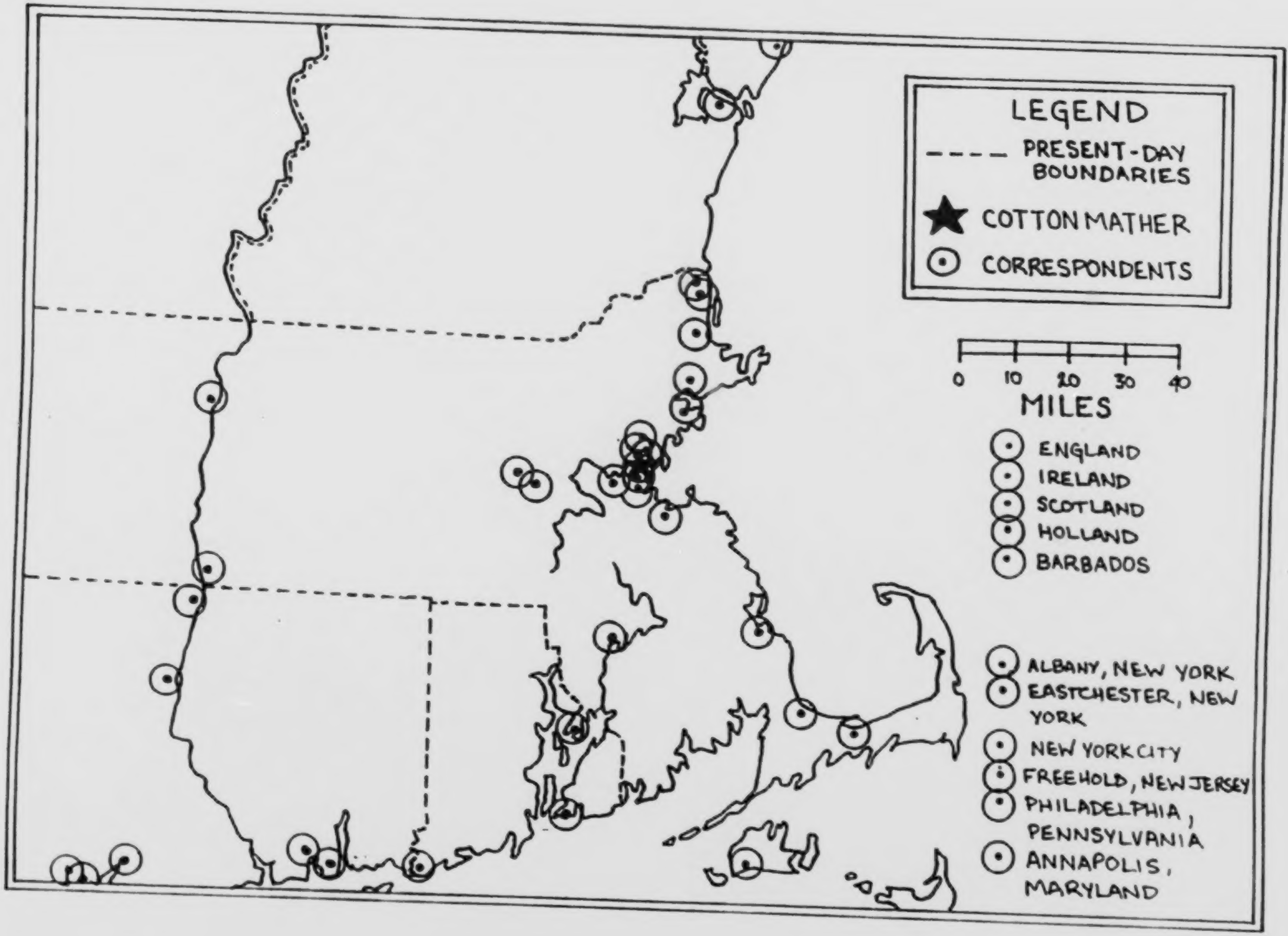
John Cotton (1640-1699, HC 1657)
Wethersfield, CT 1659-1663
Edgartown, MA 1664-1667
Plymouth, MA 1669-1697 (dismissed 1697)
Charlestown, SC 1699

Total number of letters considered: 282

Cotton sent letters to	Cotton received from	Relationship	Location
	John Alden, et al	geo proximity	Duxbury
	Rev. Samuel Angier	geo proximity	Rehoboth
	Rev. Samuel Arnold	geo priximity	Marshfield
	Rev. Nicholas Baker	geo proximity	Scituate
	Mary Blake	church member	Boston
	Major Bradford		unknown
Rev. William Brattle			Cambridge
Elder John Chipman		colleagues	Plymouth
	Church at Rehoboth	geo proximity	Rehoboth
	Church at Taunton	geo proximity	Taunton
Elizabeth Cotton		daughter-in-law	Sandwich
Joanna Cotton	Joanna Cotton	wife	Plymouth
Rev John Cotton (1661)	Rev John Cotton (1661)	son	Exeter, NH
Rev. Rowland Cotton	Rev. Rowland Cotton	son	Cambridge Sandwich
Rev. Seaborn Cotton	Rev. Seaborn Cotton	brothers	Hampton, NH
	Samuel Cutbert	church elder	Middleboro
Rev. Samuel Danforth	Rev. Samuel Danforth		Taunton
Rev. John Davenport	Rev. John Davenport		New Haven, CT
Henry Dering	Henry Dering		Boston

Cotton sent letters to	Cotton received from	Relationship	Location
	Rev. Shubael Dummer		York, ME
	Rev. John Eliot		Roxbury
	Rev. Samuel Fuller	church ordination	Middleboro
	Rev. Daniel Gookin		Cambridge
Gov. Thomas Hinckley	Gov. Thomas Hinckley		Barnstable
Mrs. Mary Hinckley			Barnstable
	William Hoskins	church member	Lakenham, MA
	Hannah Johnson	church member	Boston
Rev. James Keith	Rev. James Keith	geo proximity	Bridgewater
	Thomas King	church elder/geo	Scituate
Rev. Cotton Mather	Rev. Cotton Mather	nephew	Boston
Rev. Increase Mather	Rev. Increase Mather	cousins/bros-in-law	Boston/London
	Rev. Nathaniel Mather		Dublin, Ireland
	Rev. Warham Mather		Boston
Rev. John Miles			Swansea, RI
	Rev. Joshua Moody		Portsmouth, NH
Rev. Noah Newman	Rev. Noah Newman	geo proximity	Rehoboth
	James Oliver		unknown
Robert Pierpont			Roxbury
Rev. Thomas Prince			Boston
	Edward Rosseter		England
	Josiah Rosseter		Guilford, CT
	Samuel Sewall		Boston
Rev. George Shove	Rev. George Shove	geo proximity	Taunton
	Benjamin Smith		Sandwich
Rev. Jonathan Tuckney	Rev. Jonathan Tuckney	cousins	Hackney, England
Rev. Samuel Treat			Eastham, MA
	Henry Wainwright		unknown
	Rev. Samuel Wakeman	Harvard overlap	Fairfield, CT
Rev. Zechariah Walker	Rev. Zechariah Walker	Harvard overlap	Stratford, CT

Cotton sent letters to	Cotton received from	Relationship	Location
Rev. Thomas Walley	Rev. Thomas Walley	geo proximity	Barnstable
	Rev. Benjamin Woodbridge		Bristol, RI


LEGEND
PRESENT-DAY BOUNDARIES
COTTON MATHER
CORRESPONDENTS
0
10
20
30
40
MILES
ENGLAND
IRELAND
SCOTLAND
HOLLAND
BARBADOS
ALBANY, NEW YORK
EASTCHESTER, NEW YORK
NEW YORK CITY
FREEHOLD, NEW JERSEY
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

Correspondence Web

Cotton Mather (1663-1727, HC 1678)
Boston, Second Church

Total number of letters considered: 569

Mather sent letters to	Mather received from	Relationship	Location
	Ebenezer Allen		unknown
Rev. Jedediah Andrews	Rev. Jedediah Andrews		Philadelphia
Sir William Ashurst	Sir William Ashurst	Gov of NE Company	London
Elizabeth Attwood			Ipswich, MA
James Aynsworth			London/Barbados?
Rev. Samuel Bache	Rev. Samuel Bache		Port Royal
	Rev. John Bailey		Limerick, Irelad
Rev. John Barnard			Annapolis
Lord Barrington (John Shute)		Governor's brother	London
Rev. Joseph Baxter			Medfield, MA
Jonathan Belcher			Boston, MA
Ebenezer Billings			Dorchester, MA
Samuel Bishop			London?
Sir Richard Blackmore			London
Rev. A.W. Boehm	Rev. A.W. Boehm		London
Capt Noah Bowman			Charlestown, MA
Rev. Thomas Bradbury			London
Rev. Simon Bradstreet			Charlestown, MA
Rev. William Brattle			Cambridge, MA
John Briggs		CM's lawyer	Boston, MA
Rev. James Brown			Glasgow

Mather sent letters to	Mather received from	Relationship	Location
Rev. Simon Browne			London
William Burnet			Albany?
Robert Calef			Boston, MA
Dr. Edmund Calamy			England
Richard Chiswell			London
Rev. Nathaniel Clap			Newport, RI
Rev. James Clark			Glasgow
John Clark			Boston, MA
Mrs. John Clark			Boston, MA
	Rev. Ninian Cochrane		Londonderry, England
Rev. Benjamin Colman	Rev. Benjamin Colman		Boston, MA
Mrs. Joanna Cotton		CM's aunt	Plymouth, MA
Rev John Cotton (1640)	Rev John Cotton (1640)	JC=CM's uncle	Plymouth, MA
Rev. Nathaniel Cotton		cousins	Bristol, RI
Rev. Rowland Cotton		cousins	Sandwich, MA
Rev. Thomas Craighead		relative of Lydia	Freetown, MA
Rev. George Curwen			Salem, MA
Rev. Samuel Danforth	Rev. Samuel Danforth		Taunton, MA
Capt John Dean			unknown
Henry Dering			Boston, MA
Gov Joseph Dudley	Gov Joseph Dudley		Boston, MA
Judge Paul Dudley			Roxbury, MA
William Dudley			Roxbury, MA
Jeremiah Dummer	Jeremiah Dummer		London
Lt Gov William Dummer	Lt Gov William Dummer		Boston, MA
Rev/Dr John Edwards			Camridge, Eng
John Foster			Boston, MA
Rev. Thomas Foxcroft			Boston, MA
Samuel Fraser			London

Mather sent letters to	Mather received from	Relationship	Location
John Frizzel			Boston, MA
Lydia Lee George		wife	unknown
	Benjamin Gerrish		Boston
Rev. Joseph Gerrish			Wenham, MA
	Edward Goddard		Framingham, MA
	Timothy Green		New London, CT
Isaac Greenwood			London
Matthew Griswold	Matthew Griswold		Lyme, CT
Robert Hackshaw	Robert Hackshaw		London
Dr. Edmund Halley			London
John Hathaway			Freetown, MA
Richard Henchman			unknown
Gov Thomas Hinckley			Barnstable, MA
Rev. Nehemiah Hobart			Newton, MA
Thomas Hollis			London
Rev. William Holmes			Chilmark, MA
Rev. Samuel Hopkins			Springfield, MA
Gov Robert Hunter		Gov of NY	Albany, NY
Thomas Hutchinson		CM's Landlord	Boston, MA
William Hutchinson			Boston, MA
Dr. William Jameson			Glasgow
Dr. James Jurin		Royal Society	London
Sir Peter King			London
Mrs Kitchen			unknown
John Lacy			London
Rev. John Leverett			Cambridge, MA
Rev. Joseph Lord			Chatham, MA
John Christoff Marini			Savoy
Atherton Mather			Suffield, CT
Increase Mather, Jr.		IM Jr.= CM's son	London/Boston

Mather sent letters to	Mather received from	Relationship	Location
Rev. Increase Mather		IM=CM's father	Boston/London
Rev. Nathaniel Mather	Rev. Nathaniel Mather	uncle?	Dublin, Ireland
Rev. Samuel Mather	Rev. Samuel Mather	brothers	Witney, England
Mrs. Samuel Mather		sister-in-law	Witney, England
Emmanuel Matthews			London
Sir John Maxwell		Univ of Glasgow	Glasgow
	Rev. Experience Mayhew		Chilmark, MA
	Elizabeth McCarty	possible bride	Boston?
John Mico			Boston, MA
Rev. Robert Millar			Paisley, Scotland
	Rev. Joseph Morgan		Eastchester, NY Freehold, NJ
	Rev. Joseph Moss		Derby, CT
Rev. Daniel Neal			London
Henry Newman	Henry Newman	SPCK	London
Rev. John Nichols			unknown
	Rebekah Nichols		New York
Isaac Noble			London?
Lord Nottingham			London
Oliver Noyes			Boston, MA
Rev. Thomas Paine			Weymouth, MA
Daniel Parker			unknown
Rev. Joseph Parsons			Amesbury, MA
	Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton		Boston, MA
Samuel Penhallow	Samuel Penhallow		Portsmouth, NH
Dr. James Petiver			England
Francis de la Pilloniere			Streatham, England
	John Plaisted		Portsmouth, NH

Mather sent letters to	Mather received from	Relationship	Location
Peter Pratt			unknown
Rev. Nathan Prince			Cambridge, MA Westerly, RI
Rev. Thomas Prince	Rev. Thomas Prince		Boston, MA
Joseph Prout			unknown
	Rev. John Quick		London
Rev. Thomas Reynolds	Rev. Thomas Reynolds		Little Eastcheap England
John Richards		churchmember	London/Boston
Royal Society			London
John Saffin			Bristol, RI?
Rev/Gov Gurdon Saltonstall	Rev/Gov Gurdon Saltonstall		New London, CT
Capt Ephrahaim Savage	Capt Ephrahaim Savage		Boston, MA
Samuel Sewall	Samuel Sewall		Boston, MA
Stephen Sewall			Salem, MA
Gov Samuel Shute			Boston, MA
Sir Hans Sloane			London
	Rev. William Smith		New Haven, CT
Rev. John Sterling	Rev. John Sterling		Glasgow
William Stoughton			Boston, MA
Rev. John Swift			Framingham, MA
Rev. Peter Thacher			Boston, MA
	Rev. Christopher Toppan		Newbury, MA
George Vaughan			Boston, MA?
Rev Benjamin Wadsworth	Rev Benjamin Wadsworth		Boston, MA
Richard Waller		Royal Society	London
Rev. Henry Walrond			England
	Rev. John Walrond		Ottery, England
Rev. Ward			Holland

Mather sent letters to	Mather received from	Relationship	Location
Rev. Isaac Watts	Rev. Isaac Watts		London
	Rev. Joseph Webb		Fairfield, CT
Jacob Wendell			Boston, MA
Pelatiah Whittemore			Boston, MA
Rev. Michael Wigglesworth			Malden, MA
Rev. Daniel Williams			London
Rev. John Williams		brothers-in-law	Boston/Deerfield
John Winthrop	John Winthrop		New London, CT
Waitstill Winthrop			New London, CT
Richard Wittingham			London?
Rev. Robert Wodrow			Glasgow
Rev Timothy Woodbridge			Hartford, CT
Rev. James Woodside			Brunswick, ME
Dr. John Woodward			London
Elihu Yale			London

CHRISTMAS PUFFERY:
CHRISTMAS BOOK ADVERTISING IN NINETEENTH CENTURY NEWSPAPERS

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Abstract
Christmas Puffery: Christmas Book Advertising in Nineteenth Century Newspapers

This examination of book advertising provides a historical perspective on the cross-relationship of two print media, that of books and newspapers. Advertising of books during two Christmas seasons twenty-five years apart is compared, looking at nine American newspapers, two in New York and others in both publishing and non-publishing cities. Differences and similarities in appearance and emphasis are noted, with respect to geographic locale, other advertisements, and especially status of the advertiser -- publisher or vendor, book shop or department store?

Changes from 1869 to 1894 are discussed in light of national changes in commerce and advertising, as well as in publishing, particularly looking for shifts in importance of author, price, genre, and publishing house. The changing relationship between the newspapers themselves and their book advertisers is highlighted, particularly as newspapers embarked on self-promotion and their own literary ventures. The degree of national reach is discussed, and consciousness of the Christmas gift-value of books is generally noted. The belief that book advertising was restrained by the reserve of the publishing culture, as charged by contemporary critics, is substantiated in some contexts but undermined in others.

CHRISTMAS PUFFERY: CHRISTMAS BOOK ADVERTISING IN NINETEENTH CENTURY NEWSPAPERS

Books have arguably been given as gifts for the length of their history, and the giving of books as Christmas gifts has become a tradition of long standing. As the nineteenth century progressed, Christmas gift-giving and commercialism evolved in parallel. As the American print industry itself grew, with mushrooming production not only of books but also of newspapers and magazines, advertising became a critical fact of commercial life and thereby of periodical survival as well. The separate growth of each of these phenomena has been explored and documented in various histories, but their interrelation has rarely been considered.

The interest of this study is in the advertisements intended to sell books during the Christmas season at two points in the latter nineteenth century. Christmas had achieved the status of public holiday in virtually the entire nation by the mid-1860s.[1] The methodological presumption is, then, that if book publishers or booksellers advertised at any time during the year, they did so during the week or so before Christmas. Moreover, the selling effort implicit in the ads might suggest something about perceptions -- at least by the advertiser -- of the role of books in the minds of the reading consumers. Finally, a snapshot of the relation between advertiser and the print community may be provided at the same time.

The years 1869 and 1894 were chosen to provide a diachronic profile of changes from mid- to end-of-century. The year 1869 represents a time somewhat removed from emergence from the Civil War and, perhaps, beneficiary of what James Wood perceived as a post-war commercial "pent-up demand."[2] It was the debut year of *Rowell's American Newspaper Directory*, listing newspaper circulations for the purposes of interested advertisers.[3] Twenty-five years later the country had progressed well into the industrial revolution as the end of the century approached; and a sophisticated advertising industry and culture had developed as periodicals flooded the newsstands and the mails. In 1895 the book industry saw a higher level of production than in any year hitherto.[4] In John Tebbel's view, that rise "came mostly from the increased and permanent demand for standard works, which booksellers reported sold during the year and especially at the [1894] Christmas season more rapidly than any other category."[5]

The newspapers chosen for this study include two from the New York publishing hub, the *Times* and the *Tribune,* to be compared with papers from Chicago (*Tribune*), Boston (*Herald*[6]), Philadelphia (*Inquirer*), Louisville (*Courier-Journal,* oriented as much to the southern midwest as to the south), Atlanta (*Constitution),* San Francisco (*Chronicle),* and New Orleans (the *Bee/Abeille*, as a regional paper aimed at a French-speaking readership with possible European orientation). The papers for the last full week prior to Christmas and whatever few days thereafter up to Christmas[7] were surveyed for book and bookstore advertisements. In addition, articles appearing in the same time frame offering advice on holiday purchases, particularly those highlighting books, were consulted as found during that period and compared with ads run in the same papers.[8] That the New York papers would have the most extensive book advertising was to be expected, but how much would appear in the papers of more distant cities with infant or non-existent local publishing industry? Who would be the actual advertiser -- publisher or bookseller? And what would the advertising look like?

Further questions about the similarities and differences among the ads depend on considerations applicable to any study of publishing history. Did the ads, in fact, emphasize publisher? Author? Content? Presentation? Who were the ostensible readers/consumers and how was the advertisement pitched to them? How conscious were the advertisers of the status of the books *as Christmas gifts*? The existence and history of gift-books as a genre is outside the scope of this study, but they certainly were in evidence as book ads were examined.

Few references to books as Christmas gifts are to be found among work concentrating on the history of the American Christmas, largely because such studies have come to focus on the secularization and commercialization of Christmas and thus are more concerned with consumer commodities and their role in Yuletide commerce. James Barnett focused, for example, on that secularization, discussing the exploitation of Christmas through gift exchange that "occurs chiefly between social equals," expressing primarily "the significance of the relation to the donor."[9] Similarly, William Waits examines in depth the expressions of relationship within gift giving, including issues of gender and relative social positioning. For Waits, gifts among non-equals -- parents to children, prosperous to poor, bosses to employees, even husbands to wives -- are of particular note.[10]

Though neither Barnette nor Waits mention books as gifts, their analysis is transferable to the extent that books clearly bring with them some symbolic if not literal message. The abidingly large presence of books intended for children, for example, is an obvious indicator of intentions by those giving them, and indeed, articles featuring holiday books for children often specified what might be good for girls, what for boys, and so forth. Noting whether an advertisement emphasizes an author by name, the title and/or its genre -- reference, adventure, travel, romance, etc. -- or the physical properties of the book -- the quality of the binding, the presence of illustrations, etc. -- may also allow inference about the intentions of the potential buyer or giver. Not surprisingly, high-quality "fine" books, especially those containing "galleries" or artworks were prevalent in both years, as part of the gift-book/book-as-gift tradition -- suggesting more of a commodity than the provision of a reading experience.

Histories of advertising typically focus on the artistic, technological or ethical developments, or perhaps on the history of the advertising industry's people -- agents, artists, etc. Thus it is rather rare to find reference to the history of print culture's own advertising of itself. Most often, those that do look at cross-media advertising in print note, as Wood does, advertising of magazines in newspapers, virtually ignoring books. Frank Presbrey's venerable if almost antique history notes only in a table that by 1898 advertising of books constituted the seventh heaviest use of advertising, with no further commentary in the text.[11] However, in these and similar advertising histories, we can take note of the increase in brand-name awareness created by the development of advertising, particularly on the national level -- and ask if it did not extend into book publishing.

Given the paucity of book history, it is not surprising to find little written by book historians about the advertising of their subject.[12] Christopher Wilson observed the relationship between advertising and the best-seller phenomenon as it gathered strength in the late Victorian era. Prior to the 1890s, "promotion had usually been designed simply to make an appropriate customer aware of one's stock . . . or, more generally, to 'place' a house author in the proper literary social circles. . . . [Ads] usually consisted of one-inch bands of column space, listing publisher, title, and author."[13]

Tebbel covered book advertising to a limited extent, but his treatment of this era jumps from the Civil War to the turn of the century with rather little discussion of the interim beyond noting increasing ornamentation toward the 1890s.[14] He did, however, point out that prior to the 1890s Europeans relied much more heavily on advertising than did Americans but that situation was soon reversed,[15] perhaps following Hellmut Lehmann-Haupt's more thoughtful 1939 history in which a basic difference between Europe and America in the mission of publishing was discussed:

> In Europe, printing was started in settled communities . . . as a mechanical means of duplicating . . . the literary heritage of the Classical and the Medieval World. In America, printing almost immediately became an instrument of the active westward expansion of a nation and an important factor of colonization. The European press primarily nourished thought; the American action. In Europe printing from the very beginning meant "books," in America almost from the start, "newspapers."[16]

The distinction does not entirely hold up, especially in light of the development of an American literary scene in the nineteenth century, as well as the continuing appetite for European classics. But it does highlight another facet of American book-publishing's self-image and its role with respect to newspapers: as Lehmann-Haupt noted, Europeans relied upon booksellers to guide buyers and sell books, while the onus of promotion in America lay initially with the publisher. Although not all publishers saw it that way, advertising could be a means to the necessary creation of demand.

Comments on the squeamishness of American publishers toward advertising are not difficult to find. In his landmark study of American best sellers, in which Frank Luther Mott does discuss the role of advertising, he noted that "after the Civil War, publishers failed to keep pace with producers in other fields in the matter of advertising; their announcements were dignified, modest, even shy."[17] According to him, modern advertising began in the 1890s, but much of the book advertising looked very similar to its antecedents -- a title, perhaps a short description of contents or, more frequently, format, and perhaps a price. That perception is substantially supported by the evidence, as will be demonstrated.

Within the industry, the controversy as to what was appropriate in the advertising of books is apparent in articles like Jeannette Gilder's in an 1892 *Printers' Ink*, deploring the over-restraint in book advertising; but even she prescribed limits: "As a rule, books that are sensationally advertised are not worth buying."[18] Thus the dilemma: how did a "gentleman's industry," with an industrial cultural history allowing only the most limited promotion, respond to the change in American commercial practices and the increasingly intense event of the American commercial Christmas? Who was to promote the books for Christmas? What types of books? How and on what basis? Will things be very different away from New York City? The following examination, of nine papers in eight cities for only a few days in each of two years, can only begin to suggest answers.

December 1869 Book Advertisements

Newspaper advertising of books in the ten days or so before Christmas of 1869 reflected clear awareness of the season and the gift status of books in the eastern, southeastern and midwestern papers. Phrasing such as "suitable for gifts," "books for holiday presents," or "choicest gift books" was common within ads or in column headings.

Typically, the heaviest advertising appeared on one or two chosen days in the week prior to Christmas Day (which fell on a Saturday), often on one weekend day and/or one day in midweek. By Christmas Eve, advertising dwindled, and little appeared thereafter.

In San Francisco, relatively little mention of the season could be found; rather more important seemed to be the toll of oversupply, as evidenced by urgent references to bargains due to large inventory (although it is not clear whether early subscription books or old paper backs were involved, or if competition from libraries or low readership were implicated). New Orleans's bilingual paper reflected almost no acknowledgment of the holiday at all, and none at all in its very few book ads.

The appearance of the advertisements was not often substantially different from that of ads for other products, due largely to the technological limits of the time. Typically, ads were only distinguishable from text by the increased use of space around and between lines of type. Printing technology made any manipulation of type, font, or ornament difficult or expensive, although the creative use of repetition of the agate lines[19] or geometric arrangements of type could be found. There were, however, perceptible differences from paper to paper, even when the same ad was involved. The *New York Times's* sedate style rendered its ads essentially text-like (fig. 1), while the *New York Tribune* made slightly more emphatic use of bolder and often larger type with rules creating boxes around ad copy. The *Chicago Tribune* used a newer, non-agate font, larger with a more decorative, livelier look to it, such that large-point bold headers stood out sharply against the white paper background -- and advertisers, including publishers, took advantage of it, although other ornamentation was not evident.

Beyond a given newspaper's house style, however, differences were most often linked to who the advertiser was: where the advertiser was a publisher, the advertisements were most often text-heavy; when the advertiser was a bookstore, more white space and less copy was often the rule -- sometimes because the ad was quite small (e.g., a half column-inch). Indeed, the function and location of the advertiser was of significance in many areas, as will become evident through this discussion.

Regarding content, advertisers generally took one of four approaches, depending often on whether the advertiser was publisher, vendor, or both. One was simply to *name the bookselling establishment* and its hours for the holiday season with form of inventory list, as Dutton and Scribner did in some of their ads. A second was to list the *types of books* available from the publisher or bookstore, as with New York bookseller Asher's "large assortments of holiday books suitable for Christmas and New Year's Presents, illustrated galleries of art, gift books of the season, standard and poetical works, Bibles and prayer books, juvenile and toy books, Sunday school reward books, miscellaneous books, &c. &c. &c Holiday Books." This generic inventory provides a good profile of the sorts of books thought suitable for gift-giving. The implied commodification of Asher's product for this season and the implied customer for it is underscored by how Asher located itself for the buyer, not once but twice within the same ad: "two doors below Tiffany & Co.'s" -- i.e., the carriage trade. But is that approach particularly appropriate to a vendor, where a publisher might use a different approach? Remember that in this era, publishers often sold their own books, on premises or by mail.

A third approach was to *list books by name* and a line of minimal description, as M. W. Dodd and Routledge did; but even then, Routledge had made an effort to classify the books by type, "new gift books," "other fine art gift books," "standard works," and "juvenile books." Occasional references to known authors are made, but these listings almost always included more information about the physical presentation of the book: "Watchwords for the Warfare of Life. From Dr. Martin Luther. 1 elegant volume, 12mo, tinted paper. Cloth extra ....$1 75," or "The Cabinet Edition: 16mo, tinted paper. In an elegant cloth case for presentation. 7 vols.... $11 00." The gift book tradition intersects with commodification here, and some ads lacked any identification of author or title, concentrating on genre and presentation. The intended recipient was a connoisseur of the material object.

The fourth type of ad -- most often placed by a publisher -- featured *specific books*, with a paragraph of discussion for each, sometimes a summary of the subject, as often a description of the physical contents, and on rare occasions a quote from a review in another newspaper. Appleton thus featured its Goethe and Schiller galleries, two religious books, a book of engravings, a children's book, and *The Poet and the Painter: Or Gems of Art and Song,* one of the books featured in a *New York Times* article:

> An imperial octavo volume of four hundred pages, containing choice selections from the English poets, and superbly illustrated with ninety-nine large steel engravings, printed in the most perfect manner on the page with the text. In full morocco, antique and morocco gilt, $20.
> This volume, it is believed, is the most sumptous (sic), the most richly illustrated, and altogether the most elegant gift book published in America.

In its combination of imported literary value, pictorial artwork, and aesthetically designed and executed material vehicle, *The Poet and the Painter* was a splendid example of the gift ideal for Christmas 1869. And in general, particularly in the east and midwest, the types of books advertised were fine books and juvenile books, although Bibles and religious works were well-represented, perhaps marginally more in Chicago than in New York. Among the most thoroughly advertised works that year were *Pictures and Painters* by T. Addison Richards and *Episodes of Fiction*, both put out by New York's Virtue & Yorston; Richard Doyle's *In Fairyland* published by Appleton; Aldrich's *Story of a Bad Boy* -- a new Horatio Alger by Loring, and *Midsummer Night's Dream* illustrated by Konewka by Boston's Roberts Brothers, along with *The Poet and the Painter.*

The material presentation of the book was at least as important as its content, if not more so in many cases -- particularly where vendors had placed the advertisement and purchasers were less readers than those cognizant of the formal significance of book-giving. Authorship was important primarily where the European standard works were involved, with limited appeal to name-recognition otherwise. In New York and Chicago, there was clear consciousness of the identity and role of the publisher -- which came close in some instances (e.g. with Charles Scribner, or Fields, Osgood) to functioning as a brand-name, even if national brands had not yet become part of the advertising scene. Price was always included, but in publishing cities, it was not usually presented as the critical consideration for the purchaser. Ads in the Chicago paper reflected somewhat more concern for the bargain-conscious, while price-consciousness (especially in hard-pressed San Francisco) was still more evident elsewhere, plausibly because the advertisers were merchants.

Books advertised in the Atlanta, San Francisco, Louisville, and New Orleans papers were more often than not "functional" books -- almanacs, tide tables, diaries, directories, and the like; not surprisingly, these were advertised by vendors. In New Orleans, where one might have expected interest in books imported from France, a rather different skew was detected. In a single ad among many others for medicines, shoes, etc., the Hebert and Escousse confectioners list "almanachs, agendas, albums pour photographie" at the bottom of an ad devoted to all kinds of "bon-bons, fruits glacees, and Paroissiens chocolat." On Christmas Day itself, the Libraire de Jaquet lists "Livres Nouveaux avec luxe" -- several stories of shipwrecks, histories, illustrated books for children, offered with many "bonbons, chocolats" and other sweets. In New Orleans, literary consumption was much involved with oral consumption.

In New York and Chicago, feature articles on holiday gift-giving and holiday books appeared on pages proximate to the book advertising -- which in all three papers represented a significant proportion of the total amount of advertising.[20] The theme of the *Times* articles was gift-buying choice, using publishers or bookstores (either a potential advertiser) as the organizing principle of the pieces, with the names of authors, titles, publishers and bookstores quite evident. Predictably enough there was considerable overlap between books and stores featured in the articles and those advertised in the paper, with the length of the description of their products roughly comparable to the amount of advertising.

The parallel feature in the *New York Tribune* was more in the nature of a collective review of the books themselves, but the correlation between editorial mention and advertisement was almost as close as that between the *Times*'s consumer-report-type article and its book ads. In Chicago, the comparable article was organized by attention first to Chicago's three local vendors and what they had to offer for the season,[21] only thereafter turning to publishers -- first to those out-of-town and only then to those publishing locally.

In such articles, *Episodes of Fiction, Poet and Painter*, *In Fairyland*, and *Pictures and Painters* were representative of a group of books that appeared almost as often in such features as they did in the ads. Often, but not always. It is certainly arguable that those named in such articles were those who had published and that it is those who publish who will advertise. Moreover, the fact that some of the books featured in the articles are those most heavily featured in the ads may well only reflect the scope of the publishing effort of a given publisher for that season. But even if such arguments could be deemed simplistic or naive, the correlations between advertising and copy were far from direct.

The *Chicago Tribune*'s distinction between local publishers/vendors and out-of-town publishers brings us explicitly to the issue of locus and reach of nineteenth century book advertising. Its article included imported publications and those from New York and Boston publishers, notably Fields, Osgood of Boston, whom it lauds for the quality of its line. Regarding Chicago's publishers (Western News and Griggs), the article observes, "It is hardly yet time to expect holiday publications from our Chicago houses. The making of books in this city is still in its infancy, although that infancy is a very vigorous and promising one."[22]

While New York dominated the publishing industry, Boston and Philadelphia publishers advertised vigorously outside their local market -- proportionately more evident in distant markets, given the number of publishers in each city, than were the New York publishers, most often represented by Scribner and Virtue & Yorston. Several out of town publishers advertised in the *Chicago Tribune*; but some only advertised their magazines, like Appleton, Sheldon, and Hurd and Houghton. From Philadelphia, Lippincott also advertised its periodical, but also "Ouida's" new novel, *Puck* -- a work not advertised in the New York papers despite its likely popularity. Advertisements from Boston firms included the same Roberts ads had appeared in New York and ads from Fields, Osgood, for their *Holy Grail, The Cathedral,* and *A Tale of Eternity* (perhaps not unrelated to the literary editor's good opinion of their list), as well as ads from the American Tract Society (a religious publisher) and Littell and Gay for their literary magazine. An article "from our own correspondent" in Boston on "Mother Goose a Boston Lady" and other Christmas books from Fields, Osgood, together with one on the *Atlantic Monthly* strengthen the sense of a strong tie to Boston. St. Louis is represented in another magazine ad, and Rochester, New York, was the address of James Vick, selling Vick's *Floral Guide* -- a combined guide book and catalogue.

Outside the three primary publishing cities and Chicago, booksellers rather than publishers generally placed what ads there were, although some ads seemed taken directly from out-of-town publishers' promotions, as in the case of a Louisville bookstore. The F. A. Crump & Co. advertised a list of very expensive "Magnificent Gift Books." Though neither publisher nor author are ever named (only title and price), the ten books listed seem mostly to be from Appleton's holiday collection, including their galleries ("Goethe's Gallery, antique binding ... $56.00"!) and their *Poet and Painter*, included with Robert's *In Fairy Land*, and Scribner's *The Universe*. Notably, the British firm of Macmillan, which had opened offices in New York, advertised in the *New York Tribune* and the *Chicago Tribune* but *not* in the *New York Times*.

Another anomaly in that season's *New York Tribune* was the appearance of an ad for the department store Macy's, which used iterative repetition of its name down each side of its ad. The ad lists about forty categories of items for sale, and at four points along the list, the four headlines appear in large, bold type: "New Goods," "Toy Books," "Confectionery," and "Holiday Goods." Under "Toy Books" is written "English and American Juvenile Books, in sets and single, Bibles and prayer books." The other items and categories listed are primarily apparel, accessories, housewares, and toys. This was the first and only evidence of the appearance of the department store in the New York bookselling scene of 1869. But the embedding of minimally described books among a larger array of commodities for sale was to increase and by 1894 would be pervasive.

Equally significant in 1869 Horace Greeley's *Tribune* was advertising by the *Tribune* itself as publisher, promoting Greeley's *Recollections of a Busy Life*, the *Tribune Almanac Reprint,* an edition of "Margaret Fuller's Works," and Quinn's *Pear Culture for Profit*. Throughout the pages of the *Tribune* for the week, these books are featured in full-column ads, together and singly, at least three ads per issue. Apparently, potential competition between the *Tribune* and its own advertisers was not of particular concern to either of them. Elsewhere outside of the northeast, papers themselves often devoted much of their pages to their own literary publication of essays, memoirs, and stories. A quarter century later, the practice of self-advertisement -- even in competition with other advertisers -- was also to become widespread.

To summarize for 1869, we see books advertised as gifts most heavily in the cities that produced them, not surprisingly. Ads were low-key, literary, one would say "tasteful," although that was in large part a function of the limits on technology. Where publishers and publisher-vendors advertised -- primarily in publishing cities -- the ads reflected consciousness of the content, author, and presentation of the book. Elsewhere, ads from booksellers were more likely to announce attractive generic inventories than to promote specific books. In New York and Chicago, there was clear consciousness of the identity and role of the publisher -- which came close in some instances (e.g., Scribner, or Fields, Osgood) to functioning as a brand-name, even if national brands had not yet become part of the advertising scene. Chicago balanced awareness of Eastern publishers with its own "infant" industry. Where the relationship of advertising to editorial policy may have been an issue in New York, potential competition between the newspaper-as-publisher (either of in-text works or as a book-producer in its own right) and other booksellers was more an issue in Chicago, Louisville and Atlanta, to varying degrees. For them, a reader was *their own* reader. In the next quarter-century, advertising would see the development of new technology and new philosophies of promotion, and Christmas was becoming a commercial focal-point. How would that affect book advertising?

December 1894 Book Advertisements

The newspapers of 1894 were beneficiaries of the burgeoning commercial life of America as well as innovations in graphics and typeface. Evidence of the Christmas season frequently took the form of lively decorative embellishment through the body of the paper as well as energetic exhortation to the Christmas shopper throughout the ads. Consciousness of the gift-value of books, however, was less often made explicit than had been true in 1869, frequently conveyed primarily by the context of the newspaper's seasonality rather than in direct ad copy. Advertising in general had become highly pictorial, depicting the wondrous new world of purchasable commodities. Book ads, however, seemed for the most part unequal to the competition. Buried in a remote corner of a full-page ad for the wares of a department store or sedately confined to a text-heavy ad from a publisher, book advertisement had only seen rather subtle, albeit significant, changes since 1869 -- with one large area of exception.

Granted: books do not immediately suggest promotion of highly visual character; yet at the time, even the graphic representation of a book -- 🕮 -- could have provided some visual eye catcher for the commodity for sale. The most ubiquitous book ads in 1894 were, in fact, one for the Merriam dictionary, appearing with an open-book logo, and one for *The Science of Life*, the title of which appeared written across the pages of an open book (often shown alongside a drawing of the head of the ostensible author, a Dr. W. H. Parker of Boston). Further graphic possibilities are suggested by the December number of the industry's *Literary News*, devoted to presentation of the season's "star" books. The reviews included several fine illustrations from the works discussed, yet not even the smallest line-drawing appeared in any of the advertising for these books, despite earnest descriptions of the quality and/or quantity of illustration. Plausibly, the cost of such graphics may have been prohibitive for short-run advertising, compared to the economy of preparing and placing ads like Merriam's and Dr. Parker's for national circulation. But otherwise the inclusion of graphics seems not to have been attractive to publishers and booksellers, even if it was evidently available to advertisers of other wares; books now competed with silver shoe-hooks and mahogany tea tables for the attention of the moneyed gift-giver.

One or two department store ads also used an open-book graphic to indicate the presence of a book department, but the general rule was that book ads remained primarily textual. In the *New York Times*, in fact, the format of the publishers' ads was almost indistinguishable from their antecedents of twenty-five years earlier (cf. fig. 1 and fig. 2); and with the exception of some minimal embellishment in Macmillan ads, things were not appreciably better in the *New York Tribune*. Again, some of the New York publishers ran their ads in the *Chicago Tribune* and, again, these ads had more emphatic treatment than in the New York papers -- sporting new, artistic fonts, decorative borders, and scattered decorative touches.

Outside of New York and Chicago, publishers' ads had all but disappeared -- even those of local publishers in Boston and Philadelphia, some of whom nonetheless advertised elsewhere, relying on coupon and mail-order business. Boston's Roberts (soon to be absorbed by Little, Brown) advertised in New York papers, as did Estes & Lauriat; while Longman's, Green, which had not advertised in New York, appeared in the *Chicago Tribune*. Often, an out-of-town publisher was represented by one local vendor, as, for example, Appleton sold through Chicago's McClurg bookstore. Houghton Mifflin advertised in all four cities, and Harper advertised there and beyond. The December 1894 *Literary News* article had featured Harper's *Hypatia* by Charles Kingsley, along with several other Harper publications including du Maurier's *Trilby*, a nascent best-seller. Harper & Brothers placed ads for their products as far away as San Francisco, but the appearance of their ads was essentially identical everywhere -- that in the *Chicago Tribune* being the most typographically interesting version but still primarily textual.

Bookstore ads appeared little more frequently than they had, relatively speaking, in the 1869 season -- in all likelihood unable to match department stores' advertising resources, but perhaps also reflecting the persistence of carriage-trade mentality and an aversion to vulgar commercialization. As noted above, they sometimes lifted an out-of-town publisher's ad copy directly, thus replicating the common text-heavy style. A sophisticated advertisement placed by Brentano's in the *New York Times* (fig. 3) isolated the firm's name and reference to French books in an otherwise empty box -- tasteful, understated, and striking on the heavy-text page of the *Times*. Brentano's *Chicago Tribune* ad was a bit more elaborate, presented there in a distinctive fin de siecle type and highlighting the ancillary goods offered (see fig. 4); but it still was outshone by the visual jumble of department store ads. Outside of New York, most other cities boasted only one bookstore ad.[23] In one unique association, Atlanta's Columbian Bookstore announced a ten-day sale of all its books beginning on December 17, listing albums, games, pens, stationery, and "Fireworks! Fireworks!" as the added incentive to visit the store.

Where publishers' or bookstore ads did appear, compared to the exuberance of the highly pictorial ads for department stores and the vigorously illustrated literary content provided by some of the newspapers themselves, book advertisements were virtually eclipsed in papers other than the largely unillustrated *New York Times*. While the absolute number of ads had increased since 1869, the proportion of book ads to other ads had dropped substantially, although precise quantification would be difficult given the now much increased embedding of book ads within department store display ads. Books now occupied the odd corner of otherwise quite visual ads for New York's Macy's and Bloomingdale's, Boston's Jordan Marsh or R. H. White stores, Philadelphia's Wanamaker's and Chicago's Boston, Columbus, and other stores. Among Chicago's stores, the Leader distinguished itself in running an assertively visual ad for its books (fig. 5) separate from its main display ad, embellished with its banner logo, the exhortation "Look at the Books . . . Look at the Prices," and drawings of five covers of featured children's books -- an effort unduplicated elsewhere.

The Leader's command to "look at books, look at prices" reflects a palpable shift in emphasis of most book advertising toward price-consciousness. A common type of bookseller advertisement for this year either simply listed authors and titles with price -- often noted in boldface as special or discounted ("our price") -- or merely proclaimed "bargains in Christmas books" without much description at all. Prices could be as low as five cents, although they seemed to cluster either in the ten-to-twenty-five cent range or in the $1-to-$3 range, most likely depending on genre and binding. In comparison, 1869 advertised prices clustered in the $1-to $2 range, though the fine edition of Virtue & Yorston's *Pictures and Painters* was advertised at $25; but price had rarely been the emphasis of the advertisement (with exceptions noted above). By 1894, not only had the modal range of advertised prices shifted downward, but price had become an important part of the selling message.

The concurrent shift from publishers to vendors as advertisers, particularly with the rise of the department store, may be sufficient explanation for the rising emphasis on price. However, one cannot escape the further interpretation that commodification and massification had reached book publishing as American society itself saw the evolution of mercantilism and commercialization. Books were being sought by segments of society more concerned with price than had been the case in the past. Reader/gift-givers were now consumers more than connoisseurs -- consumers of a variety of items among which books were just one category.

Yet it would be a mistake to characterize the changes in book advertising by 1894 entirely in mercantilist terms. The increased importance of the author in many of the ads (other than those that were mainly a price list) indicated another significant shift. While thoughtful discussion of the literary history of the day is beyond the scope and intent of this study, it should be noted that the rise of the indigenous American author was well under way. What one sees in the book ads is, however, abiding attention to known and favorite authors, whether European *or* American, local (e.g., Martha Lamb's New York history advertised in the *Times*) or national. Advertisements often included qualifying identification such as "author of...." or "D. D., LL. D." Robert Louis Stevenson's death on December 17 prompted Roberts to feature his works in their advertisement of Wednesday, December 19 -- a quick response for the times. Relatedly, even the designers and illustrators were sometimes spotlighted, as in Macmillan's ad for their Cranford Series. There were still descriptions of the physical specifications of the book ("12mo, cloth binding," etc.) but they were much subordinated to the names of the authors and the works. The recipient of these books does read them and is familiar with, if not a specific author, then the habit of identifying adopting an author whose work has been enjoyed. In a sense, authorship (or creator-ship) had come to function more as a sort of brand-name than publishing houses had ever been able to achieve for their own name.

Otherwise, where book advertisements were more than price-lists or generic references to inventory ("bargains on children's books"), they often strove to describe somewhat more about the book itself -- content, author's status, its worth to the reader ("young lads will enjoy it"), as well as price and some physical description where significant. The types of books advertised, particularly with reference to seasonal giving, still included considerable numbers of children's books and Bibles and religious works. Perhaps as part of an attempt to create reader loyalty to specific publishing houses, publishers would offer an imprint series like Macmillan's Cranford series -- comprising "daintily illustrated books, very suitable for Holiday Gifts," with titles listed by the likes of Jane Austen, Washington Irving, "Mrs. Gaskell," and "Miss Mitford," as well as editions of Aesop's fables and Grimm's fairy tales. Exotica and travelogues, local interest and history, and even the beginning of how-to and self-help works reflect the expanding horizons if not of the consuming American public then at least their booksellers.

The relationship of the newspapers themselves to their book advertisers had, meanwhile, become rather more complex. In this era, only the *New York Times* ran a "books for holiday gift-giving" feature during the ten days or so before the Tuesday Christmas, and that article was organized -- purportedly -- around visits to the city's multiplying bookstores (some part of publishing houses): Funk & Wagnalls, Richmond, Nelson, the U. S. Book Co., Brentano, Bonaventure, Barnes, and Dillingham. However, the piece actually focuses on specific books and authors, organized by publisher and/or bookstore, with the names of the publishing houses integrated into the discussion. Of special note was "Mrs. Lamb's well-known 'History of the City of New York,'" by Barnes, which the writer praises with the inclusion of a laudatory review by Tammany reformer Dr. Parkhurst, whose remarks are reproduced in all ads for the book. As before, all the works discussed in the story are found in the advertising during the pre-Christmas week -- and more than in any other paper, book advertisers in the *New York Times* were the publishers in this "company town."

Although in the same sort of guiding article was now infrequent in the other papers, in Atlanta the "New Books" feature on Sunday discussed several favorite authors, Anthony Hope (*Prisoner of Zenda*), Joel Chandler Harris, Stevenson, Doyle, Du Maurier, Hall Caine, Dumas, and Hugo, even though the *Constitution* had almost no book advertising other than that for the Columbian's ("fireworks") and one from a department store offering "1,000 books." Thus one might infer the paper's belief that its subscribers were readers of literature, while its advertisers did not seem interested in that motivation for gift purchase. Or was the newspaper itself a formidable purveyor of literature and competitor for the Atlanta readers' attention? A particularly imposing double-column ad ran twice during the week, with a parade of portraits of eighteen authors arrayed around the copy, listed as the paper's "Literary Engagements for 1895." "In keeping with its policy of publishing the best Literature by the greatest authors, the Constitution has made engagements with more the FIFTY . .. Famous authors," including Hope, Harris, Doyle, Bret Harte and Rudyard Kipling. The *Louisville Courier-Journal* for the same period ran precisely the same advertisement for *its* "Literary Engagements," as did the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

Syndication was becoming a fact of publishing life, and such newspapers were now themselves purveyors of literature. Many advertised products of their own presses. The *Atlanta Constitution* offered the *Earthly Footsteps of the Man of Galilee* by subscription. The *Chicago Tribune* offered a set of books recalling the recent World's Fair, *Peristyle to Plaisance*, for fifty cents. The *Louisville Courier* was also running ads for two other series, Palmer Cox's *Queer People* (for $1.30, $1.40 with shipping --"Nothing so amusing to the children") and the sixteen-part *Napoleon* Series ($2.60, $2.75 shipped) -- "Not for sale in books stores. Can be had only from the Courier-Journal Co . Place your orders at once if wanted by Christmas." One of the papers' most distinctive ads was an artfully calligraphed advertisement for the Courier-Journal Printing Company. Similarly, the *Philadelphia Inquirer's* main bookstore advertiser was the *Inquirer's* own book shop.

In many cases, the newspaper itself included in its pages literature appropriate to the season, often heavily illustrated -- as in the Sunday, December 16 edition of the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Page borders there were each covered lavishly with decorative figures or animals, plants, Christmas symbols (bells, trees, etc.) and Asian servant-boys. Trees, bicycles, monkeys, shoes, and Japanese lanterns kept company with stories, poems, essays and even music. In Louisville, the *Courier* provided an extensive and well-illustrated "Literature" section set strikingly across its pages, with memories of past

Christmases, advice, reminiscences, and stories. The *Boston Herald* similarly ran a large display ad promising literary Christmas delights in its forthcoming "Holiday Herald," and in that edition, in addition, the musical score for a "Ten-pin Gallop" (dedicated to a women's bowling league) was reproduced amid many pages of stories, essays, and anecdotes.

The effect of newspaper competition with its own book advertisers, however, is nowhere so evident as in the *Encyclopedia Britannica* advertisements that dominated the Atlanta and Chicago papers. These ads constituted the exception to most of the "rules" governing the still rather staid book advertising of the era -- prescribing restrained and text-heavy copy, and focusing on authorship and/or price. According to Tebbel, the firm of Belford, Clarke & Co. had gained rights for American publishing of the series on a royalty basis, and it had been their idea to do so through newspapers by subscription and installment payment, an arrangement not long after called "the greatest phenomenon of modern publishing."[24] If the quality of the advertising is any indication, that may not have been an understatement. Certainly, no other bookseller advertiser could have afforded the space and art for such an ad.

Each ad was different, many occupying a quarter- or half-page, almost all featuring large and carefully drawn illustrations with Santa -- a figure recently contrived and adopted by commerce in the promotion of Christmas[25]-- somehow involved. One showed him atop a sleigh filled with encyclopediae, the copy indicating that "Santa Claus' Book Establishment" has been working overtime to supply the great demand for the books, at the expense of toys and candy. Another showed "bold, bad burglers" holding Santa up for his encyclopedia. Says the copy in the *Chicago Tribune* (more strikingly set than can be duplicated here):

> **Everybody can be benefited and instructed by reading the Encyclopedia Britannica, for it is the sum total of all human learning, and yet through the *Chicago Tribune* it can be secured for**
>
> 10 CENTS A DAY.
>
> **Nothing could be more valuable or acceptable than the 25 volumes which constitute this work, for a**
>
> CHRISTMAS GIFT.

All the ads repeat the theme of "10 cents a day" and include a coupon to be filled out and sent to the "Educational Department" of the *Chicago Tribune*. The *Constitution* ran a similar, but different series of advertisements for "their" edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. These ads were somewhat more artful and less startling in concept, but some were even larger than those in the Chicago paper, and the themes were the same -- access to all of knowledge for 10 cents a day -- what a gift! These papers' subscribers had become reader-consulters, consumers of information more than literature. Indeed, the exhaustive array of multiple subjects covered by the encyclopedia (see fig. 6) and listed in many of the ads reads hauntingly like the promises of vast informational riches offered today by World Wide Web browsers.

What had happened since 1869? The impact of commercialization and commodification is obvious, particularly in the role of department store advertising: for such retailers, splashy appeal was important and price was paramount. Technical innovations in type and graphics were evident in these merchants' ads; but publishers and bookstores had forestalled taking full advantage of the possibilities, thus creating a perceptible difference between book ads and other advertising in the era. Frank Luther Mott's characterization of publisher's ads as "shy" and Gilder's lament in *Printer's Ink*[26] that the reserve of publishers made for dull and stultifying advertisement are substantiated. But what Gilder was not yet in a position to see was the widening of the split between "serious" publishing and popular book retailing -- eventually, perhaps, that between "high" and "low" or "middlebrow" culture. Ads for the New York, Boston, and Philadelphia publishers (as well as Macmillan) had changed little in appearance since 1869, although their collective emphasis on authorship had increased. The possibility of marketing books with more artful advertising manifested itself the acceptance of more variety and design in the *Chicago Tribune*'s ads, not to mention the impressive encyclopedia ads. New York publishers were just not ready to take the plunge.

If New York's domination of publishing advertising had not changed, the competition by regional newspapers for the book-giver's dollar was evident in their own literary output as well as advertising for syndicated series and encyclopedia subscription. If one remembers that the force of the newspapers' own promotions for their "Literary Engagements for 1895" and their subscription sales often resided in recognition of favorite authors and series titles, the importance of authorship and subject matter gains strength. Were publishers missing their chance to establish themselves with something comparable to brand-name recognition? Not Merriam, Rand-McNally, or -- by association -- publishers of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. And perhaps not those attempting to collect non-reference works into identifiable series, such as the Cranford series by Macmillan. Attempts to attach publishing house names to favorite authors -- like Roberts with Robert Louis Stevenson -- arguably constituted an effort in that direction, although publishing history offers many other reasons for monogamous alliances between author and publisher. But the other New York and Boston houses visibly eschewed making what undoubtedly seemed to them a crass bid to be seen as seeking business rather than maintaining professional reputation.

And what of giving books as Christmas gifts? Christmas had certainly become a large commercial force, but the suitability of books as gifts had become so taken for granted as to seem almost overlooked. Almost. Outside New York and Chicago, for the most part books simply joined the tumble of items set out for the shopping throngs. But in New York and Chicago, it is noteworthy that the automatic labeling of "holiday books" was most frequently associated with the descendants of the gift books of the post-Civil War era -- fine art books, poetry, histories, "standards." Most of these, it can be argued, will come to be prominent among markers of the "middlebrow" consumer culture. The evolution of that group -- a large, book-buying *and* book-reading public -- as future target for advertisers, market researchers, and public relations strategists, began in this era. At least as significant, however, was the emergence of the "gift of knowledge" -- by inference, a family enterprise -- in the promotion of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* as a Yule gift worthy of supplanting all other gifts. More than leisure-time readers, more than connoisseur-collectors, these readers were consumers of information and, as such, were early harbingers of the coming Information Age.

ENDNOTES

[1] J. H. Barnett, *The American Christmas: A Study in National Culture* (New York: Macmillan, 1954), among others.

[2] J. Wood, *The Story of Advertising,* (New York: Ronald, 1958), 171.

[3] W. D. Sloan and J. G. Stovall, *The Media in American: A History* (Scottsdale, AR: Publishing Horizons, 1993), 289.

[4] J. Tebbel, *History of Book Publishing in the United States, II* (New York: Bowker, 1975), 27, reporting 5,469 titles in production.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Unfortunately, as of this writing, the *Boston Herald* for 1869 was unavailable.

[7] For 1869, this meant the period from Saturday the 18th to Saturday the 25th plus a scan of days following Christmas to see if advertising activity dropped off appreciably, which in most cases it did. For 1894, this meant the period from Saturday the 15th to Tuesday the 25th, again with a check of days following, and again post-Christmas advertising was minimal.

[8] For 1894, the *Literary News* of December was also consulted for information as to what was being featured for that season.

[9] Barnett, 81.

[10] W. B. Waits, *The Modern Christmas in America: A Cultural History of Gift Giving* (New York: New York University Press, 1993).

[11] F. Presbrey, *The History and Development of Advertising* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran, 1929), p. 362.

[12] The recent blossoming of the field has brought with it a new interest in all aspects of Darnton's "circuit," however. The "circuit" refers to the collection of all those involved in producing, disseminating, and reading a book, from authorship through publication to reading (and back). See R. Darnton, "What is the History of Books?" in *Kiss of Lamourette: Reflections in Cultural History* (New York: Norton, 1995), 107-36.

[13] C. Wilson, *The Labor of Words: Literary Professionalism in the Progressive Era* (Athens: Univ. of Ga. Press, 1985), 79. After 1891, according to Wilson, the "damper on modern promotion disappeared," and "book advertising now attempted to enlarge the boundaries of the consumer's reading experience, both by building his anticipation in advance and then following up with often-contrived controversy, serialization, dramatic adaptation, and other merchandising angles," 81. However, this increased interest in a multi-

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phase promotional campaign was primarily applied to subscription sales; advertising of "serious" work was, as we shall see, less ambitious.

[14] Tebbel, 154-55.

[15] Ibid.

[16] H. Lehmann-Haupt, *The Book in America: A History of the Making, the Selling, and the Collecting of Books in the United States* (New York: Bowker, 1939), 229.

[17] F. L. Mott, *Golden Multitudes: The Story of Best Sellers in the United States* (New York: Macmillan, 1947), 294.

[18] The article was reprinted in *Publishers' Weekly*: J. Gilder, "On the Advertising of Books," *Publishers' Weekly* 42 (20 August 1892), 253. James Collins was to make essentially the same point some years later in his "Notes for a History of Book Puffery": "the good book, whether it be a *John Inglesant* or a *Mr. Barnes of New York*, has usually no advertising history." J. H. Collins, "Notes for a History of Book Puffery." *Bookman* 24 (Sept. 1906), 68.

[19] Presbrey reports this as "iteration" advertising. See Presbrey, note 11 above.

[20] The proportion was very approximately one-third of total advertising in the *New York Times*, somewhat less in the *New York Tribune* and somewhat less than that in the *Chicago Tribune*.

[21] The article goes on to describe the wares available at Griggs & Co. and the Western News Company – inexplicably neither naming nor noting the third vender, which might possibly have been the D. B. Cook company founded by a former partner of Griggs. Perhaps ill-will between the two demanded a choice of loyalties on the *Tribune*'s part. Described in Tebbel, 294.

[22] "Holiday Books," *Chicago Tribune* (18 Dec. 1869), 2.

[23] The *New Orleans Abeille/Bee*, now driven to become virtually all-French by the strength of its rival *Picayune*, carried only ads for city directories and atlases and oddly (its only ad in English) for a *Scientific American* handbook on patents, trademarks, and copyrights from the Munn & Co. in New York

[24] George Doran, reported in Tebbel, 446.

[25] See Barnett and Waite on the development of the Santa figure.

[26] See Mott, above, note 17 and Gilder, above, note 18.

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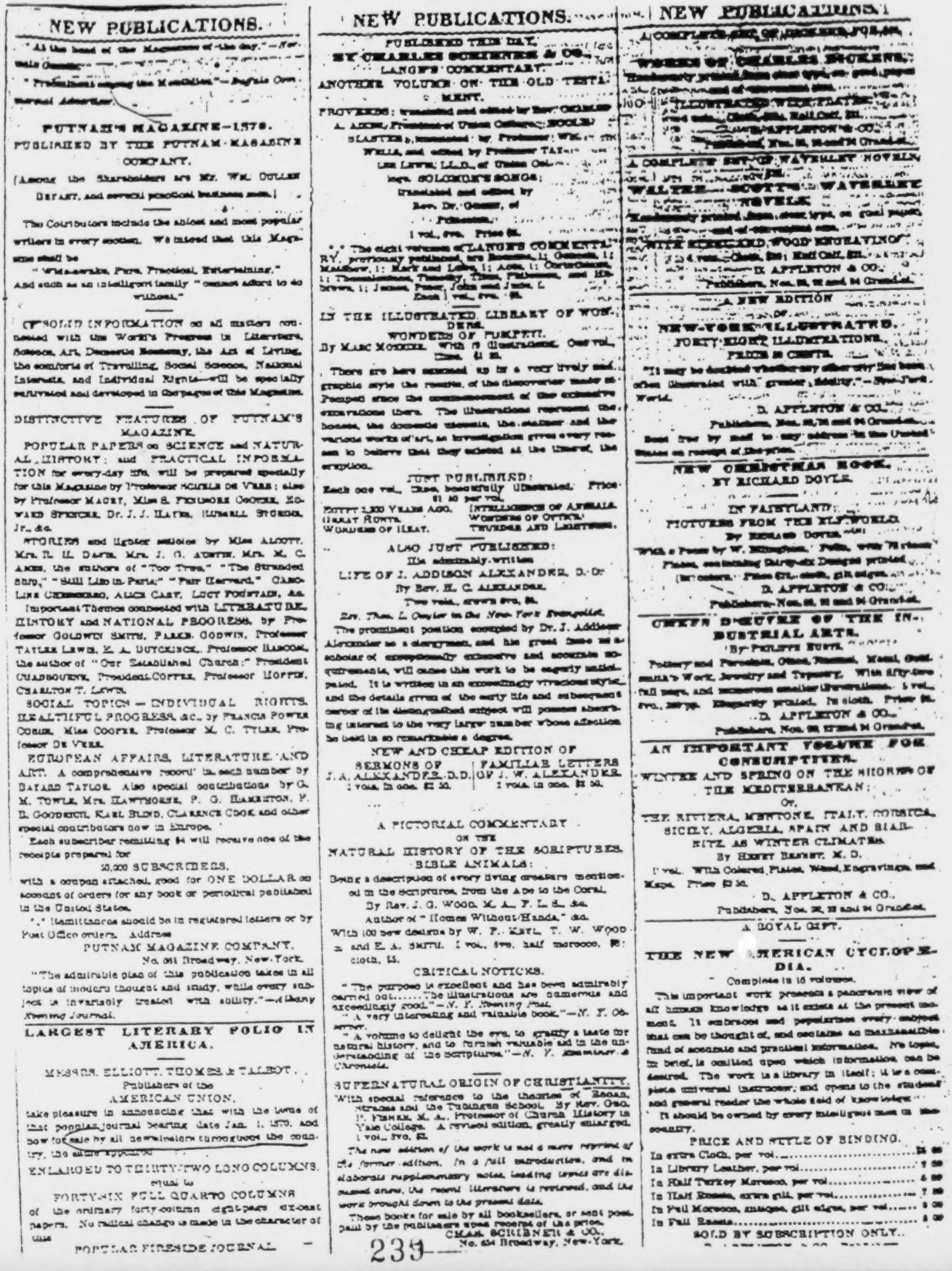
BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FIG. 1 ~ NEW YORK TIMES, 18 DEC. 1869



NEW PUBLICATIONS.

"At the head of the Magazines of the day."—Norwich Gazette.

"Preëminent among the Monthlies."—Buffalo Commercial Advertiser.

PUTNAM'S MAGAZINE—1870.
PUBLISHED BY THE PUTNAM MAGAZINE COMPANY.

[Among the Shareholders are Mr. WM. CULLEN BRYANT, and several practical business men.]

The Contributors include the ablest and most popular writers in every section. We intend that this Magazine shall be

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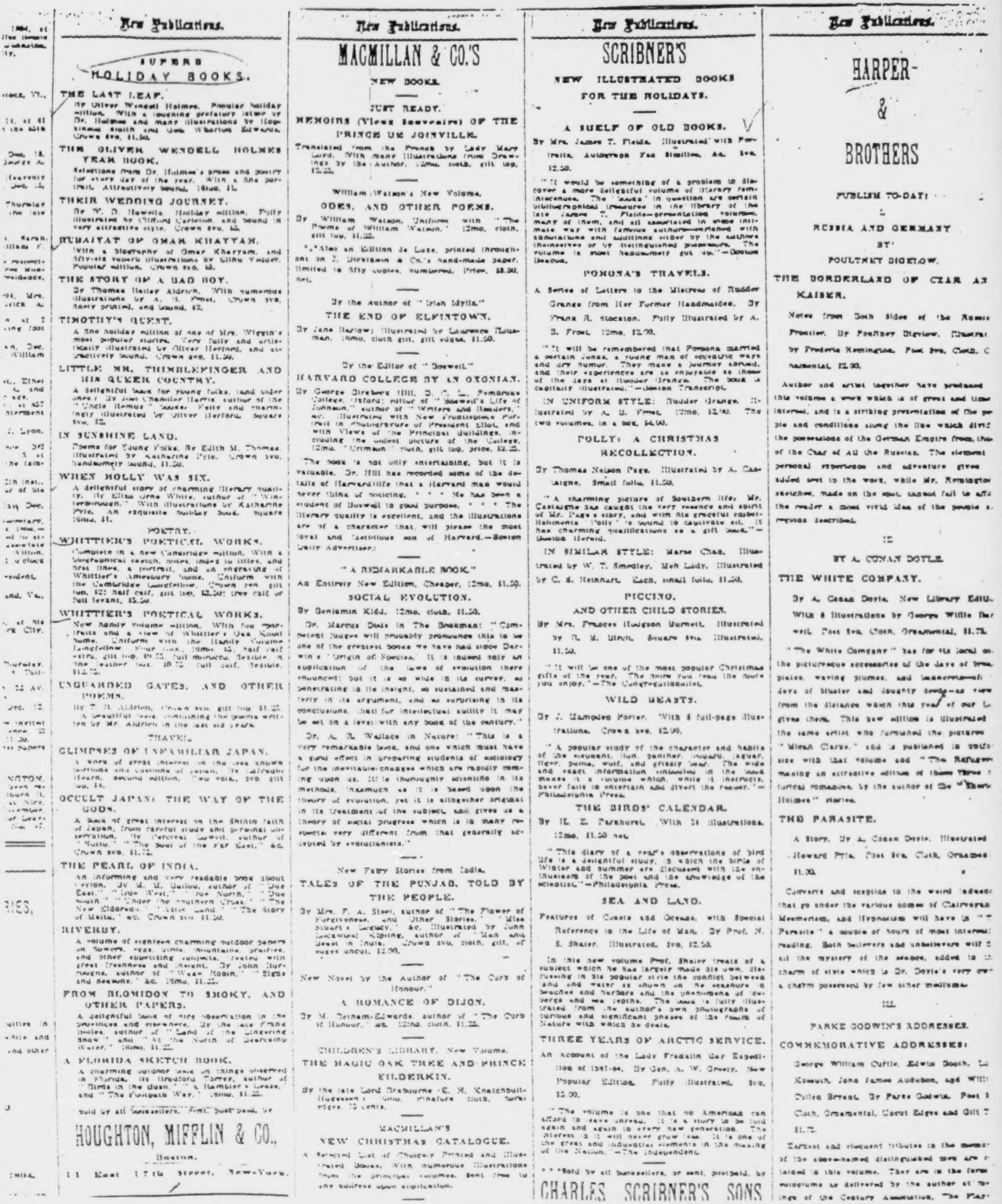

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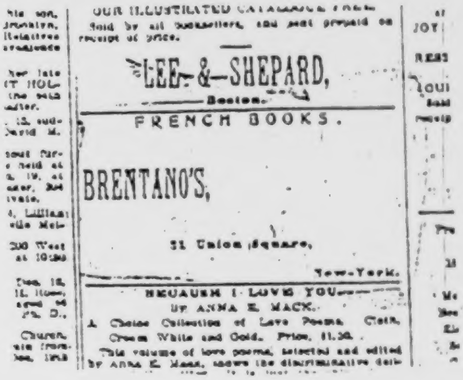

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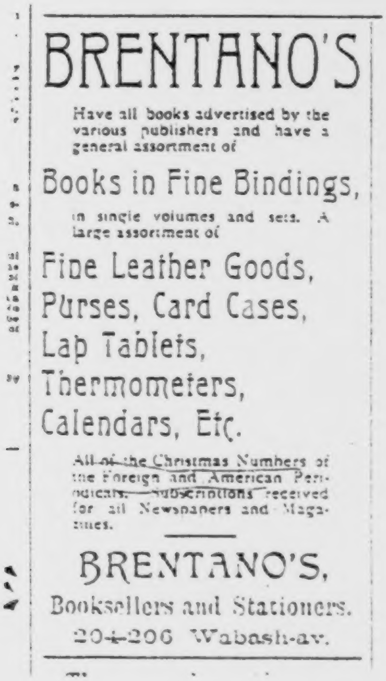

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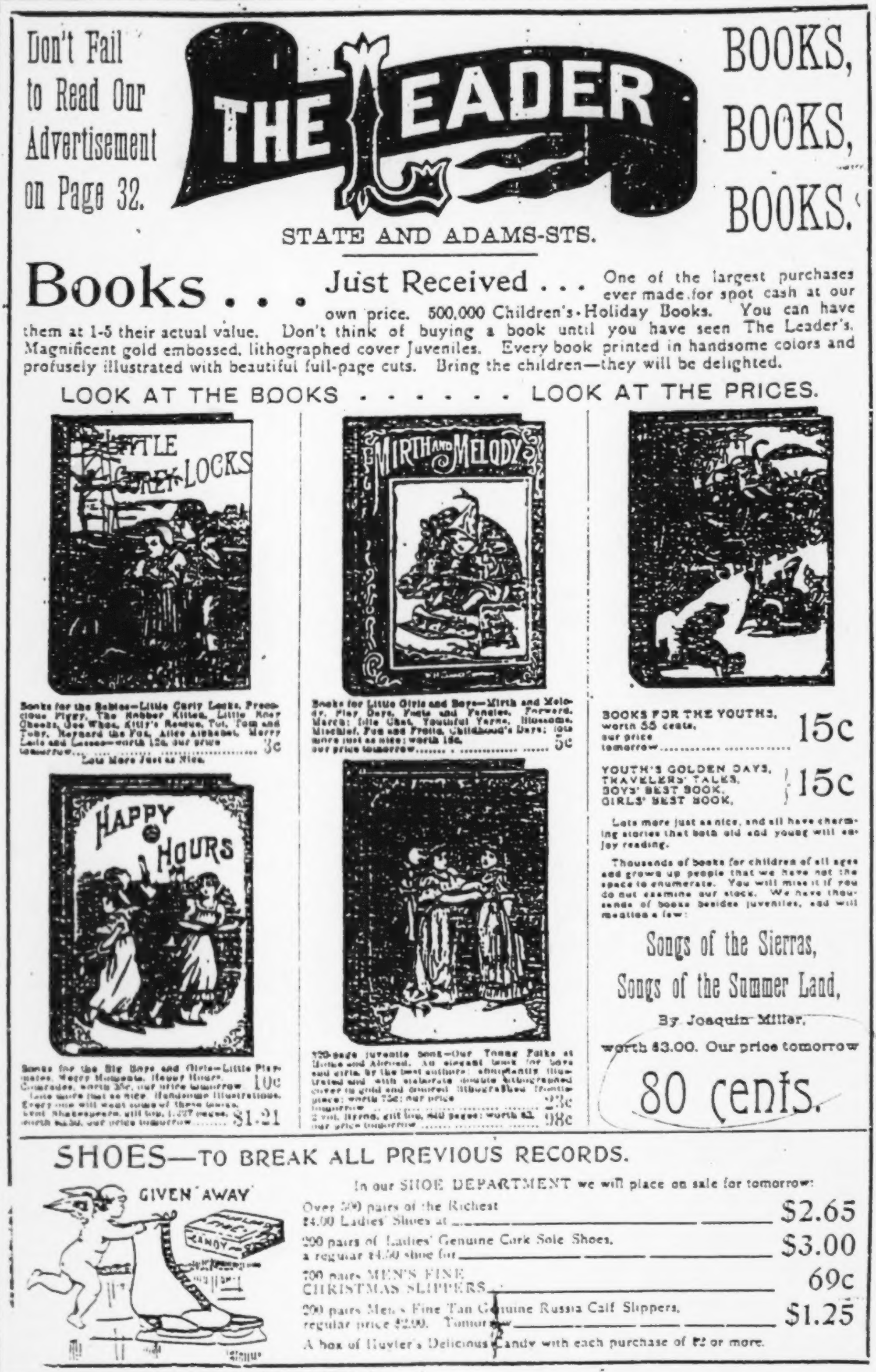

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FIG. 6 ~ ATLANTA CONSTITUTION, 21 DEC. 1894

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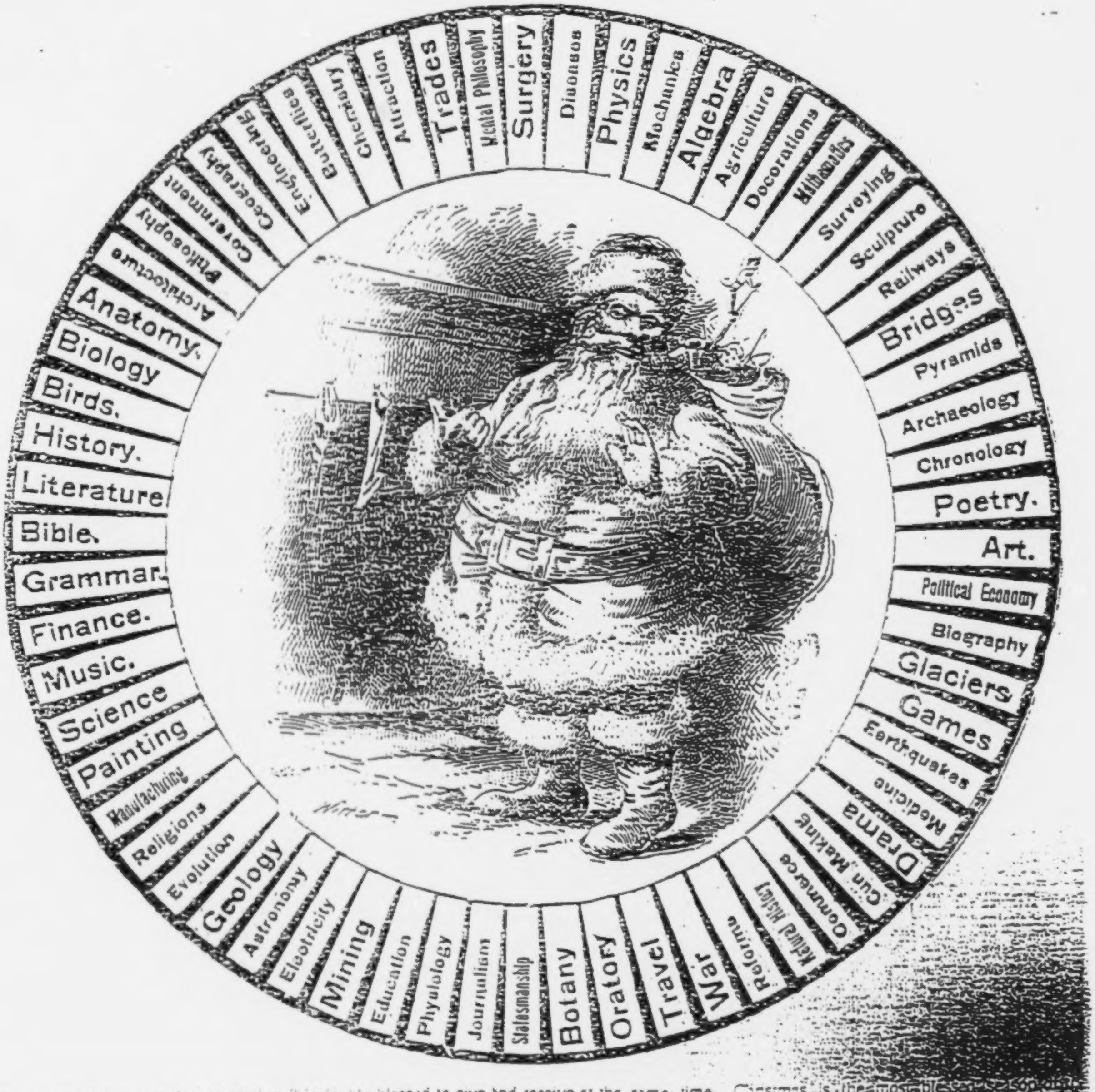
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Attraction
Trades
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s more blessed to give than to receive. It is doubly blessed to give and receive at the same time. Christmas is the most blessed season
cause it commemorates the day of the Greatest Gift to this world, and from its earliest celebration down through the long ages [illegible]
and receiving. Now THE CONSTITUTION proposes

3/96

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Little Big Horn coverage in the Texas press: Fiercely partisan myth-making

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Abstract

Little Big Horn coverage in the Texas press: Fiercely partisan myth-making

The long-lasting fascination with the Battle of the Little Big Horn and the magical allure of the name Custer make the topic an excellent vehicle for studying the state of the American press in the mid-1870s. This paper attempts to add to the existing body of knowledge of this era by examining a source that has hardly been used at all in the voluminous scholarly and popular writing on Custer and the Little Big Horn: Texas newspapers.

The study found that Texas newspapers in general covered the battle in partisan fashion, blaming Custer's defeat on the Grant administration's Indian policy. Texas coverage was noteworthy for its virulent hatred of Grant and its praise of Custer as a noble foe during the Civil War. This study found no evidence that Custer's Reconstruction duty in Texas negatively influenced coverage of the battle.

Little Big Horn coverage in the Texas Press: Fiercely partisan myth-making

I. Introduction

The long-lasting fascination with the Battle of the Little Big Horn and the magical allure of the name Custer make the topic an excellent vehicle for studying the state of the American press in the mid-1870s. This era is "almost totally untouched" by journalism historians of the 19th Century, who have instead focused on the Civil War and the Yellow Journalism of the 1890s (Schwarzlose, 1987, p. 14).

It is the purpose of this paper to add to the existing body of knowledge on this era by examining a source that has hardly been used at all in the voluminous scholarly and popular writing on Custer and the Little Big Horn: Texas newspapers. This study will thus try to shed light on one of the key historical press questions of the post-Civil War era as identified by William David Sloan: "Were editors advocates of progressive change, or were they reactionary?" (Sloan, 1989, p. 8). The study also is of interest because it will shed light on the role of the press in creating the "Last Stand" legend. Finally, the study may show some indication of the attitude of Texans toward Custer's Reconstruction service in the state immediately following the Civil War.

II. Background

Before explaining the significance of Texas newspaper coverage of the Little Big Horn, it is appropriate to review briefly both Custer's life and the battle. Custer, who was born in Ohio in 1839, graduated from West Point in 1861, just in time to join the Union Army's first major campaign of the Civil War. He was an excellent cavalry officer and rapidly advanced up the ranks of the Army until he was promoted to brigadier general at age 23, the youngest general in the Union Army. His youth, long golden hair, and non-regulation gaudy uniform made him a natural favorite of the press. Custer continued in the limelight after the war by participating in successful Indian fighting campaigns and through his own authorship of magazine articles and a popular book, *My Life on the Plains*. By 1876 he was considered by the public to be "first among military frontiersman" through a combination of his "genuine accomplishments" and favorable publicity (Utley, 1988, p. 205).

However, in the months before the battle of the Little Big Horn, Custer was in trouble with President Ulysses S. Grant for testifying before a Congressional committee about administration corruption in the licensing of traderships at Indian agencies and forts. As punishment Grant forbid Custer from leading that summer's campaign against the Sioux and Cheyenne, although after public pressure he allowed Custer to accompany the expedition in a secondary role.

Custer's 7th Cavalry regiment found the Indian encampment on June 25, 1876, and he attacked before the other elements of the expedition arrived.

Custer divided his regiment into four units; Custer and every man under his immediate command (including the only war correspondent to accompany the expedition) were killed. Members of the other three 7th Cavalry units united and survived after a two-day siege on a hilltop, but no U.S. Army soldiers witnessed the end of Custer's immediate command. The news shocked the country, which was in the middle of celebrating the Centennial. Many newspapers compared it to Braddock's defeat in the French and Indian War. The *New York Daily Tribune* in a July 7 editorial headlined "The Montana Slaughter" called it ". . . destruction so unparalleled as to be scarcely credible."

III. Previous Research

A truly staggering amount of fact and fiction have been written about Custer and the battle of the Little Big Horn. Paul Andrew Hutton began The Custer Reader by apologetically explaining why he was "presenting the world with yet another book on the ubiquitous George Armstrong Custer" (1992, p. xiii). Hutton's bibliographic essay was compiled as a guide to the Custer literature and noted that an exhaustive periodical list compiled by John Carroll included more than 3,000 items (p. 561).

A fair amount has been written about the creation of the Custer legend of the Last Stand. One of the best examples is Brian W. Dippie's 1976 book, Custer's Last Stand: The Anatomy of an American Myth, which focuses on the general's portrayal in such popular culture media as films, poems and novels. A critic suggested it was tiresome to read Dippie's numerous accounts of Custer's death; Dippie responded that his point was that Custer never really dies (Dippie, 1994). Bruce A. Rosenberg compared the narrative composition of the Last Stand legend to other great legends in Western European culture such as the Iliad and Paradise Lost (Rosenberg, 1992).

Some works have researched the role of the American newspaper of the 1870s in creating the Last Stand legend, but almost all focus on the mainstream press (Coward, 1994). Oliver Knight's 1960 book, Following the Indian Wars focuses on the work of early war correspondents and concludes they were by and large accurate and did a good job. Robert M. Utley, who has written numerous books about Custer and the American frontier, included a chapter on the press his 1962 book, Custer and the Great Controversy. Utley noted that "the wildest rumors and grossest fabrications" were printed in the aftermath of the battle and concluded that "almost every myth of the Little Bighorn [sic] that one finds today masquerading as history may be found also in the press accounts of July 1876" (Utley, 1962, p. 38-39). But Utley focused largely on press coverage of the largest newspapers of the day, particularly those in New York and Chicago. He also analyzed in some detail coverage in Western newspapers such as the *Bismarck Tribune* and the Yankton *Dakotaian* [sic]. Utley devoted but one paragraph to the Southern press, noting only that it sided with Democrats in blaming the Republican Grant administration for Custer's defeat and that the Southern press suggested Reconstruction troops be removed from the South and sent to fight Indians.

He quoted newspapers from Virginia, Louisiana and North Carolina but completely ignored Texas. Sandy Barnard went into more depth but focused on one newspaper—the New York Herald, which he noted "was in the forefront" of developing the Custer legend (Barnard, 1989, p. 6). A recent study that examined newspapers outside the mainstream press is John Coward's analysis of Little Big Horn coverage in Indian publications in 1876 (Coward, 1994).

A fruitful venue for exploration of 1870s journalism would appear to be the Texas press. The Texas newspaper industry in 1876 was showing signs of recovering from the effects of the Civil War and Reconstruction. In 1860, there had been 82 newspapers being published in Texas, but by 1865 there were only eight Texas dailies, and four of those were in Galveston (Arp, 1936). But in the period 1875-1876—a time the American Newspaper Directory stated was one of "general stagnation" for the industry—Texas added 18 new newspapers. Certainly such a large, distinct and vibrant part of the country is worthy of detailed study regarding the Custer legend, particularly since Custer served on Reconstruction duty in the state immediately following the end of the Civil War.

Most of what has been written on his Reconstruction duty relies heavily on Libbie Custer's book, Tenting on the Plains (1887), which understandably portrays Custer as being popular with the Texans. As his wife, Libbie Custer can hardly be considered an unbiased source, yet several Custer biographers have noted that he was comfortable with Southerners and shared some of their views on racial relations (Monaghan, 1959; Ambrose, 1975; Utley, 1988). But William L. Richter's (1973) article on Custer's reconstruction attitudes pointed out how he was sympathetic toward Texans while on duty in the state but advocated a harsher reconstruction policy when later testifying before Congress. A survey of Little Big Horn coverage in the Texas press should shed light on this aspect of his life insofar as it might indicate how Texans felt about him ten years after his Reconstruction duty.

IV. Texas press coverage of the Little Big Horn

The Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin boasts 2,500 titles in its Texas Newspaper Collection—the largest collection of historic Texas newspapers in existence. Unfortunately, there are gaps in the collections of many older newspapers. Only a fraction of the approximately 175 Texas newspapers listed in the 1876 edition of the American Newspaper Directory are on file at the history center. Still, enough copies are in existence to provide a cross-section of the state's newspapers to be examined for this study. The editions were only read for the month of July 1876 because, as was noted earlier, most myths about the battle had been reported by the end of that month (Utley, 1962). Coverage would continue throughout the year since the battle became an election issue. But coverage had tapered off by the end of July in the newspapers examined, and it appeared unnecessary to read issues dated after July for the purposes of this study since the tone and political viewpoint of the individual newspapers were clearly discernible. It is extremely unlikely their viewpoints would have changed later in the year.

The viewpoint of the Texas newspapers was almost universally Democratic, that is to say they tended to blame the Republican Grant administration for the disaster. This is hardly surprising, as the newspaper industry throughout the South was dominated by the Democratic viewpoint into the 20th Century (Rutenbeck, 1995). What is noteworthy is the extreme virulence of the anti-Grant sentiment in the Texas press. In many stories Grant was excoriated in such strong language that the reader might have been tempted to think the president shot Custer himself.

For example, the *Dallas Daily Herald* on July 7 wrote that "The Grant administration, dripping with the blood of Custar [sic] and his men, will now probably attempt to make a little cheap campaign capital by plunging the country into an expensive Indian war." The *Herald* blamed the administration for ignoring signs that the Indians were organizing and wrote the administration was ". . . directly responsible for this massacre. The blood of these brave men is upon the hands of Grant, Sherman and the Secretary of War." In a July 15 editorial it questioned the Republican party honoring Grant in its election platform when he had "Custer butchered."

The *Fort Worth Daily Democrat* suggested that Grant sent Custer on the campaign in hopes he would be killed, ignoring the fact that Custer had begged Grant to allow him to accompany the expedition. One of its editorials concluded that:

> . . . Grant and his friends were anxious to get rid of Custar [sic], and in order to prevent his testimony being given before the investigating committee, he was sent to the front to fight the Indians. His death will relieve him of his testimony against the Post-traderships. What a sad commentary on our government that the chief magistrate and his cabinet should rejoice in the death of one of its gallant generals.

The *Democrat* restated this theme in even stronger language on July 9, sounding almost like it was describing an organized crime hit when it wrote that "Custar [sic] knew too much about the sale of Post-traderships to suit the fastidious feeling of Grant and Belknap. His untimely death will be a great relief to them."

A July 15 editorial in the *Democrat* described the battle as an insult to the national honor, especially since it was won by ". . . a few thousand untutored savages, who know nothing of war or government as a science. . ." The writer argued that the battle:

> . . . should mantle the cheek of every proud American who glories in the strength of his government and rejoices in its success. Thus far the painted savage has outwitted the skilled diplomatist. How long shall it remain thus? As long as Grant and his kind control the government.

On July 27, the *Democrat* greeted the news of reinforcements being sent to the West with the sarcastic headline: "More troops for the Indians to kill."

The *West Texas Free Press* of San Marcos echoed the sarcastic tone of the *Democrat* when it described the Little Big Horn battlefield. On July 22 it wrote: "The Indians left the battle ground, which looked like a slaughter house. I suppose Grant and his friends are satisfied. Their miserable management of the Indian bureau has produced this state of affairs."

The Corpus Christi Gazette also criticized the administration's Indian policy and in one-column resorted to personal attack, alluding to Grant's rumored alcoholism. In its July 19 edition it ran a short paragraph that stated: "(General Alfred) Terry is now between the Little and the Big Horn of a dilemma. That's nothing. Grant has been all around many a big horn and hasn't yet come to the dilemma."

The *Fort Worth Democrat* also referred to Grant's alleged drinking problem when on July 23 it reprinted a commentary from the *Albany Argus*: "The spirits of 269 murdered soldiers should haunt Grant night and day until his death. We doubt not that he is haunted, but not by the spirits of dead soldiers."

The Austin *Daily Democratic Statesman* criticized the administration but tried to use heavy-handed humor to do it. On July 14 it ridiculed General Phil Sheridan for being in the East during the battle: "While Sitting Bull was slaughtering Custer's braves, Sheridan was the sitting ass presiding over a body of jolly junketers in a carousel at Philadelphia." The next day it poked fun at Grant: "Sitting Bull's star is still in the ascendant, and the constellation of Taurus, shining so brilliantly when we cast the *horror*scope of Grant's administration, portends its final eclipse" (italics in the original).

Even the *Galveston News*, which was listed as an independent paper in the 1876 American Newspaper Directory, was critical of the Grant administration, although its language was not so vicious as that of its Democratic contemporaries. In a page one story on July 8, it called Grant's Indian Peace Policy a "sanguinary farce." In the same edition, an editorial referred to a news account of the battle which described the Indians as being able to harass the 7th Cavalry survivors with longer-range guns than the ones supplied to the soldiers. The editorial concluded that:

> Under the Indian peace policy, the Sioux are provoked into war, and in the first pitched battle of the war they are found to have been supplied, under the Indian peace policy, with better weapons than those borne by the United States soldiers sent to encounter them. Thus the operation of the policy places the United States government in the light of conspiring with savages for the destruction of its own soldiers and officers.

On July 18, the *News* reprinted an editorial from the Cincinnati *Times* that also referred to the arming of the Indians at the reservations: "It is an open question which deserves punishment most, the Indians or the agents of the government."

The Republican of San Antonio also invoked the blood of Custer in the name of politics but for cause of its namesake party. It condemned

Congressional Democrats for trying to cut military appropriations and suggested that charges of corruption in the War Department was a political device. A July 15 editorial claimed:

> . . . this Congress is spending millions in investigations for political effect; and they have actually found but one victim—Belknap. Reduce the army in the face of recent events if it dare, and the people will execrate it for poltroonery; the blood of Custer and his slaughtered command protests against the democratic folly. Our army is ridiculously small compared to other nations . . . incapable of performing the work assigned to it over such a vast country, flanked by foreign nations and girdled by an immense frontier inhabited by hostile savages.

Of course one of the questions of the day was whether part of this small army should be used to occupy the South more than 10 years after the end of the Civil War. Texas newspapers, as one might expect, framed the Battle of the Little Big Horn in terms of Civil War memories and Reconstruction issues.

The Dallas Daily Herald provided the most vehement and frequent examples of this theme. On July 7, the same day it first reported the battle, it wrote:

> By a miserable, niggardly, partisan policy General Custer and his family, officers and three or four hundred of his men have been sacrificed. If the troops now loafing and idling in the South to

> influence the Presidential election in the interest of the Radical nominees and the Grants, Mortons, Blaines and Babcocks had been where they belong, with Custar [sic], this horrible and unprecedented massacre of brave men would not have disgraced us in this Centennial year.

In the same issue the *Herald* wryly recalled bitter memories of the Civil War as a response to Custer's defeat: "General Sherman has it in his power to try his hand at burning once more. The lodges of the Indians await his torch."

The next day it reported that "The all absorbing topic is the massacre of Gen. Custar [sic} and his men. The greatest feeling of indignation is against Grant for not having kept enough men in the Indian country to do the work."

But the *Herald* saved its most passionate writing for its July 9 issue in what for its paper was a tremendously long editorial of seven paragraphs headlined "Custar's [sic] murder." The editorial used the most evocative language imaginable to contrast the "brave," "lamented" and "gallant" Custer with the "venal" and "imbecile, corrupt and fast falling to pieces" Grant administration. The *Herald* asserted that "the *troops at this moment in Louisiana, even* " [italics in the original] would have made the difference in the battle but were kept in the South to force people to vote Republican. The administration, the Herald wrote, was "grossly derelict" in not providing sufficient troops for Custer, and "humanity sickens at this monstrous indifference of the Republican party managers to sustain the cause of justice and right."

After emotionally appealing to sympathy for Custer, his family and his men, the editorial reminded readers that the deaths were caused by the administration sending troops to Mississippi and Louisiana instead of to the West.

> The blood fairly curdles at the picture. Every family in the land should promptly resent this outrage on common decency, on national honor, and on the lives and blood of the murdered Custar [sic] and his band. The Indians were not voters, otherwise Custar [sic] would have had all the force necessary.

The *Galveston News* used a reprint from the *Herald* to state the same thing but in less florid language. On July 20 it urged Grant to "take his heavy hand off the South" by transferring soldiers to the West. The editorial, which was run on the front page, asked "Why should Mississippi be strongly garrisoned while troops are wanted to fight Sitting Bull in Dakota and all that region which is now threatened with a long, cruel and possibly a disastrous war?"

The *Fort Worth Democrat* on July 23 used a chart—somewhat of a rare device in Texas newspapers at that time—to illustrate the issue. It listed the number of American soldiers on duty in various capacities and noted 7,052 soldiers were "dragooning the South" while 260 "all massacred" served with Custer.

On July 29 the *Democrat* carried a fanciful reprint from the *St. Louis Times* that compared what it believed was the administration's indifference to Custer's death with how the administration reacted to lynchings of blacks. The editorial asked the reader to imagine that a black sheriff and a posse of 300 had been killed after being sent to arrest a southerner who had scalped a woman or child or burned a house.

> How long would it be before the 'loyal' heart of the North would be fired and ready to urge a war of extermination? How long would it be before Moxa Morton would raise the bloody shirt on one of his crutches and flaunt it to the breeze? Or how long would it be until Grant sent Phil Sheridan and 'three hundred more' to the scene of action? The killing of one of our bravest generals, and three hundred of his command, by the Indians is nothing. The killing of one negro is enough to shake the Republican party from 'centre to circumference.'

In a July 27 editorial, the *Fort Worth Daily Democrat* had used its own words to write about the indifference of the Grant administration. "The Indian traders supply the Indians with Winchester rifles, which shoot down the Union soldiers. It don't [sic] make any difference to the administration how many soldiers are killed, so that the traders get rich and pay them tolls promptly." It is interesting that the *Democrat* used Civil War terms in its editorial, referring to the troops as "Union" soldiers rather than United States soldiers, which was the term used in most news copy about the battle.

How did Texas papers treat a Yankee general like Custer? As Utley (1962, p. 42) noted, the press served as a forum for the "great debate" about who was responsible for the Little Big Horn debacle. The debate focused mainly on whether Custer was reckless and disobeyed orders by attacking too soon, or whether he used prudent judgment based on the tactics of the time and his extensive battlefield experience. Utley (1962, p. 44), maintained that the press initiated the debate when editors "sent reporters far and wide to fan the flames of the controversy" by interviewing military experts, many of whom had political axes to grind, about their opinions on Custer and the battle.

Texas newspapers generally sided with Custer, who was remembered as a noble foe during the Civil War. Not surprisingly, the *Dallas Daily Herald,* which was second to none in its attacks on Grant, was effusive in its praise of Custer. The *Herald* frequently ran brief paragraphs praising Custer in between other news items or editorials. These "briefs" carried no elaboration or explanation for their publication, but they certainly gave evidence of the paper's stance in the "great debate." For example, on July 13 the *Herald* wrote that "Custer was a superb horseman, and never was in his proper element except when spurred and mounted. He will long be remembered as the intrepid cavalryman."

A July 14 brief praised Custer's widow, reading in its entirety: "General Custer's widow is a daughter of Senator Christiancy of Michigan. She is a very beautiful woman, and was a great belle." Of course Libbie Custer's maiden name was Bacon, not Christiancy, but the paper obviously intended to pay Libbie Custer a compliment. But perhaps the ultimate encomium that a newspaper in the solid Democratic South could award to Custer was printed in a July 29 brief: "They say Custer was a democrat. He believed with Hancock and McClellan, Slocum and Hooker, Meade and Farragut, and fought like a Democrat should fight."

The *Herald* admired Custer's fighting ability, even against the South. A July 13 story recounted an 1864 battle between forces under Custer and Confederate General Thomas Rosser, who was identified by the *Herald* as the brother of Dallas resident Robert S. Rosser. The *Herald* wrote that Custer and Thomas Rosser

> . . .were true and marked types of the Northern and Southern soldier, and had blended together all that fierce, stubborn, unyielding courage which has characterized the fights of the American soldier from Valley Forge to the capital of the Montezumas. We feel persuaded that no one will regret the gallant Custer's death more than the brave young Virginian (Rosser) who opposed him so well along the banks of the Rapidan.

The *Herald* also reprinted several articles from other papers in praise of Custer or defense of his actions. On July 16 it published an editorial from the *Richmond Whig* that compared him to the Confederate cavalry hero Jeb Stuart. wrote: "The North alone shall not mourn this gallant soldier." On July 22 it published a story from the *Chicago Tribune* that told Rosser's opinion of the Battle of the Little Big Horn. Rosser's account blamed Custer's second-in-command, Major Marcus Reno, for not coming to his aid and said the he (Rosser) would sooner lie in the grave with Custer and his men that to have lived with Reno and the other 7th Cavalry survivors. Rosser wrote that he "never met a more enterprising, gallant or dangerous enemy during those four years of terrible war, or a more genial, whole-souled chivalrous gentleman and friend in peace than Major Gen. George A. Custer."

Chivalrous was in fact an adjective often applied to Custer in the Texas press. For example, a first-person story in the July 19 *Galveston Daily News* recounted the writer's conversations with Custer and various Indian chiefs in the Indian Territory in 1871.

> (Custer) was truly a picture of chivalry and conscious manhood, and the stoical Red Cloud and Spotted Tail appeared to keep their eyes directed upon him continually. The latter told me afterwards that he looked upon Custer as the greatest of the white chiefs, who understood his race—the Indian—better than all the others combined.

On July 28 the *News* reprinted a story from the *Sentinel* of Alexandria, Va., headlined "General Custer's Chivalry." This story told of a message Custer had written to Rosser after a Civil War battle in which their units had been directly engaged. Custer left the note with a farmer as he was leaving the area. Custer's note reminded Rosser of their friendship at West Point and chided Rosser for exposing himself during the battle: "I recognized you yesterday and with difficulty saved your life by stopping my fire. Don't do so again, but live to laugh over old times after the war with your friend." The article concluded that Custer was "the most spirited" of the Confederacy's enemies.

Custer's spirited fighting style was often criticized as reckless in the Republican press; the *New York Tribune* on July 7 said the results of the battle ". . . indicate great impatience or rashness." But this same behavior was generally seen in Texas newspapers as the proper way to fight Indians. The *Galveston Daily News*, for example, on July 7 wrote that Custer

> . . .was a bold and dashing officer, though he could not be accounted a rash one. In fighting Indians the boldest policy is generally the best, and no officer in the army was better acquainted with Indian character and tactics than he was.

Judging by newspaper accounts, Texans in general seemed to have an affinity for Custer. The *Daily Democratic Statesman* on July 22 reported that the Texas House of Representatives approved a resolution honoring Custer, who ". . . endeared himself to the people of the frontier and elsewhere by his bold and dashing operations against the Indians . . ."

An organization of Confederate veterans who had served in Hood's Texas brigade honored Custer at a reunion held in July at Bryan, Texas. The veterans' resolution, which was sent by the group to various Texas newspapers for publication and to Custer's family, stated, "That we recognize in Gen. Custer a rare and magnanimous officer" and "that in his death, and that of his 300 courageous comrades, the country has suffered great and irreparable loss." The *Galveston Daily News* printed the resolution under the headline "A Tribute to General Custer," on July 13 and then on July 16 published a letter from "a veteran" explaining the reasoning behind the resolution:

> It was in no spirit of truculence to the dominant faction of which Custer was a representative that the resolutions were referred to, but as a just tribute to valor, illustrated by true manhood and knightly honor, as displayed by the late Gen. Custer. The late General Geo. A Custer was an honorable foe, who disdained to strike his enemy when down, and as such was deserving of that respect which is accorded to valor when united with honor.

Some of the acts of valor reported in the Texas press were simply not true, but as with similar accounts in newspapers around the country helped to create the legend of the Last Stand. The only living witnesses to the destruction of Custer's unit were hostile Indians, and they were unavailable for comment in the immediate aftermath of the battle. But that did not stop enterprising reporters from describing the battleground with touching pathos or in some cases recounting the battle in "you-are-there" kind of prose.

A typical example of the former case was a July 8 news story published by the *Galveston Daily News*: "Not a man lived to tell the tale, but it was inscribed on the surface of the barren hills in language more eloquent than worlds." The *Fort Worth Daily Democrat* similarly reported on July 7 that " . . . nothing is known of this detachment as they were only tracked by their dead." Invariably the news accounts mentioned that Custer, two of his brothers, his nephew and his brother-in-law all died at the head of the column.

Some of the battle action stories even included quotes from Custer, although, as was noted earlier, there was no one alive to provide an eye-witness interview. *The Dallas Daily Herald* had one of the best examples of this type of story when on July 19 it described the moment Custer encountered the Indians

> When the head of Custer's column came in sight of the four thousand Sioux, he rose in his stirrups, swung his hat in the air and shouted: 'Hurrah, Custer's luck; the biggest Indian village on the continent!' An hour later Rain-in-the-Face had cut out his heart.

Rain-in-the-Face was often accused of (or credited with) killing Custer, and according to some sources admitted on his deathbed that he killed Custer. But most Little Big Horn scholars agree that not even the Indians know who killed Custer for several very good reasons, not the least of which is that they didn't even know Custer was at the battle until much later (Connell, 1984). Rain-in-the-Face made good newspaper copy because he had in fact been arrested by Custer's younger brother Tom and had sworn revenge on the Custers. Many papers reported that Rain-in-the-Face cut out Custer's heart, but his body was actually not mutilated. Tom Custer's body was found with its heart removed, but the Texas press, like the national press, did not get the story right. The *Galveston Daily News*, for example, reported on July 14 that

"Rain-in-the-Face cut out Custer's heart, put it on a pole, and a grand war dance was had around it." The *Fort Worth Daily Democrat* reported the same story almost word-for-word on July 16 but added that it was a "long war" pole.

In some cases the newspapers printed as fact stories that were completely false. Several papers reported incorrectly that Sitting Bull or Crazy Horse or both were killed at the battle. *The Dallas Daily Herald* on July 26 reported with undisguised relish that both were killed:

> General S. Bull scorned to speak English, but conversed in very fair French. His impassioned oratory in his native tongue was wonderfully effective on his savage cohorts. But Custer's men sent the General and Crazy Horse to their happy hunting grounds, and there is no further need for French interpreters in future Pow Wows.

In a story on July 16, the *Herald* had reported that "Custer had shot three Indians with his revolver, and sabred 3 others ere he was killed." This was a pretty impressive achievement considering the 7th Cavalry was not armed with swords at the battle. On July 19 it reprinted a story from the *New York Herald* that had a slightly different version but that was no less dramatic:

> Custer road in with three hundred and fifty men, and would, the writer believes, have killed the whole two thousand Sioux if there had been no enemy behind him, but instead of carrying the front, he was right in the center of between three and four thousand Sioux. Those behind him kept concealed until he was right in their midst, and then,

> when too late, he made a bold dash, trying to cut his way through them, but there were too many. He fell about the first one, and his horse became unmanageable. The poor soldiers were cut down in less time than it takes to tell it.

V. Conclusion

But as evidenced by their extensive coverage of the battle, Texas newspaper editors believed it was a story worth telling. As the *Galveston Daily News* wrote on July 16 when explaining why it was publishing a letter written by Custer in 1874, "Everything pertaining to the late Gen. Custer is at this time interesting." And through their often fanciful descriptions of the battle, the Texas press contributed to transforming the battle into an American legend.

As far as Custer's Reconstruction service in Texas, a review of Texas coverage of the Little Big Horn has added little information. Texas newspapers published numerous positive items about Custer's Civil War service but virtually nothing about his Reconstruction duty. Even the *Daily Democratic Statesman,* which was published in Austin—the city that hosted Custer's Reconstruction headquarters for about four months in 1865 and 1866—ignored that part of his military record. Whether this omission was due to a desire to forget Reconstruction or because Custer made no impression while in Texas is impossible to tell from the evidence. Further research on Custer's Reconstruction duty might shed light on this question.

But what of the great question for this period of journalism history as suggested by Sloan (1989)? One of the main questions that this study can attempt to address is whether editors were reactionary or developing professional techniques. The review of Texas press coverage of the Little Big Horn clearly weighs on the reactionary side of the scale.

The Texas editors were not just partisan, they were fiercely so, even given that the journalistic standards of the time are different from today's concept of objectivity. In their editorials, Grant did not just make a mistake in keeping troops in the South, he was a murderer. Custer was not just an experienced soldier whose luck ran out, he was a gallant chivalrous knight who died in a fight against overwhelming odds. Perhaps in Custer the Texans could see their own futile struggle against the powerful North during the Civil War. The Confederate veteran who wrote to the *Galveston Daily News* about his group's tribute to Custer perhaps best captured this feeling when he wrote that its:

> resolutions express the feelings of all true Southern soldiers, who today would gather about the bier of the knightly Custer and drop the tear of sympathy for the former foeman, sincerely regretting that a career, which promised to be so illustrious, should have been cut short by a governmental policy so ill designed for the protection of the lives of both citizen and soldier of this republic, who are exposed by geographical position to the incursions of the savages of the border.

The key to the attitudes of Texas editors may well have been their proximity to the frontier. While the Eastern press could write about the battle with an intellectual detachment, the problem of Indian attack was an immediate concern for Texas editors, whose newspapers often carried stories about local Indian raids or the possibility with another war with Mexico on the same pages as their Little Big Horn stories. While *The New York Times,* in a July 8 editorial headlined "Politics Run Mad" criticized the "partisan press" for making the battle an election issue, the Texas press was making the battle a local issue for Texans. The *Galveston Daily News* on July 8 wrote that Texas could easily furnish volunteers who would avenge the Little Big Horn.

> Give Texas a fair show at the exultant Sioux, and there will be consternation and mourning in their wigwams before many moons have passed. The red devils must be wiped out or reduced to complete impotency, and Texans are the men to do it. Only give them a call.

Yet despite the general ferocity of its partisanship, this study found a few intriguing hints that a more independent press was on the way. The *Daily Democratic Statesman,* for example, suggested in a thoughtful July 20 editorial that a pension for Libbie Custer was more important than a proposed monument for George Custer. And on July 27, the paper urged the public to see Custer as a human being with both good and bad qualities.

> Custer was a hero and not a soldier; a daring reckless fellow on the field and at the card table. His virtues were those of a soldier and not of a citizen. He died as became a fearless fighter. It is proper, while the

Herald lavishes most extravagant encomiums, to tell the simple truth of the man. Me [sic] have known those who loved him most who rarely smiled.

Perhaps 120 years after his death, we should finally take the *Statesman's* advice.

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The Paper and the Poles
The first major crusade of Buffalo's *Evening News*

By Jerry Goldberg

On June 12, 1881, *The Buffalo Evening News* began a series exposing the horrid living conditions of the Polish immigrants who had come to Buffalo to build a new life. The series was the first major crusade undertaken by the paper and its founder and publisher, Edward H. Butler. The series showed how landlords were charging exhorbitant rates for shabby tenements inhabited by as many as forty people. During the crusade, at least seven children died, including an infant who, the paper reported, "had been without medical aid or food for over a week."

The series, I believe, will be of interest to journalism historians because it shows that muckraking crusades were going on well before the standard dates set for that era in most journalism histories, such as Jacob A. Riis' work exposing the conditions in the New York City tenements in the 1890s, and Joseph Pulitzer's *New York World*, which detailed the dreadful conditions for the poor in 1883. The work of Riis and *The World* also shows how much newspapers in big cities like New York affected journalism history while the accomplishments of others in smaller markets tend to be overlooked.

My research also shows the difference between Butler and the later muckrakers. Butler lacked the moral outrage of the later progressives, who were not concerned with making a profit while they worked to reform the ills of industrialization.

The Paper and the Poles

The first major crusade of Buffalo's *Evening News*

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The Paper and the Poles

The first major crusade of Buffalo's *Evening News*

In 1874 Edward H. Butler, founder and editor of *The Buffalo Sunday News,* gave the first hint he was thinking about an evening edition for his highly successful weekly product. In a May 10 story in that year announcing *The News'* new press, it was reported that the press could turn out ten thousand papers in a few hours, which "will also be advantageous in throwing off the large edition of the new evening two cent paper that is now talked of as one of the things in the near future."[1] Despite having six years to think about it, Butler ended up putting out the first edition of *The Buffalo Evening News* on Oct. 11, 1880, in a frenzied rush, which perhaps explains why the first edition was really supposed to have been the second -- the first edition was aborted when the type was spilled on the composing room floor.[2]

Butler knew he had to hurry the birth of his new daily because an invader was on the way from the west. James E. Scripps of the *Detroit News* had already purchased a printing plant and was preparing to publish the daily *Evening Telegraph* in just a few weeks. *The Buffalo Evening News* came out just three weeks before the *Telegraph's* first issue.[3] The rush to publish turned out to be a successful move on Butler's part. The new evening edition was an immediate success, and never was threatened by the *Telegraph.*

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Once Butler and *The Evening News* became dominant, however, he made it clear that *The News* would be more than just a bright and lively newspaper. It would also be a power in the community. One problem that affects Buffalo today also was true in the late nineteenth century. Most of the city's industry was in the hands of out-of-town interests who took far more interest in profits than in the welfare of the community.[4] Butler did not hesitate to fill that vacuum. Less than a year after the first issue of the *Evening News* hit the streets, Butler launched a campaign that was to solidify the newspaper's position not only as the city's leading journal, but as a major player in community life. He did it by crusading for a group that was powerless, unpopular and poor -- the Polish immigrants.

The nature of American cities began to change in the 1880s as immigration from eastern and southeastern Europe increased. Immigration to the United States passed the half-million mark for the first time in 1881, just a short time after The *Evening News* first hit the streets.[5] Many Polish immigrants bypassed Buffalo on their way to larger mid-western cities such as Chicago, Detroit and Milwaukee. The first Pole to settle in Buffalo was Martin Stephanowski, a 47-year-old laborer who arrived in 1864. During the next decade, Stephanowski and his family were joined by about thirty other Polish families. In 1874, with the opening of St. Stanislaus Church and its school, Poles began to feel more at home in Buffalo and their community began to explode, so that by 1892 there were thirteen thousand Poles living in the city.[6]

If the Poles did feel more comfortable, it was not because they were given a warm welcome from either established Buffalonians or other ethnic groups who had arrived earlier, particularly the Irish and Germans. The more established Irish and German communities looked upon the Poles with contempt. The city's newest immigrants were almost uniformly poor, non-English speaking and illiterate, and were seen as not capable of participating in a system of self-government. Even their Catholicism did not help to form a bond with other Catholic immigrants. The fact that the majority of priests and all the bishops were Irish caused resentment among the Poles (as well as the Italian and German communities).[7]

Moreover, the Poles resisted attempts to assimilate into the secular culture. They saw American conventions such as public education, separation of church and state and dry Sundays as alien customs aimed specifically at them as Catholics. Few of them took part in civic or non-Catholic charitable organizations. They were seen as an alien presence, with one contemporary historian describing them as "a conspicuous colony" that had "engrafted itself on the east side" and having "little in common, except in business connections, with the vast interests of the city at large.[8] They settled largely in tenements on Alabama Street, with as many as forty people crowded into dingy three-room flats. Unscrupulous landlords charged exorbitant rates.[9]

The *News*' Polish crusade started on June 12, 1881, when the *Sunday News* ran an article on conditions in the Polish tenements on Alabama Street. Three days later the *News* ran a four-inch follow-up story at the top of page one headlined "THE CITY'S DISGRACE." It reported the death of an infant who "had been without medical aid or food for over a week." It said there were forty people in one tenement, including six children near death and one woman "with scarcely enough clothes to cover her (as she) tosses about on the floor in a high fever." Although the paper commented on the slow reaction of the board of health and the council, it called upon the citizens of the Third Ward to take matters into their own hands to prevent the spread of disease.

The next day, it was clear that Butler and the *News* had decided to make the plight of the Poles the *Evening News*' first major crusade. The Polish story now occupied the lead position in column one on page one with a story headlined "BUFFALO'S SHAME." Four other subheads followed, including, "The Polacks Still Suffering, and Nothing Done to Aid Them," "DISGRACEFUL OFFICIAL NEGLECT" and "A VISIT TO THE HOUSE OF DEATH." The story also included a rare graphic showing the location and layout of the tenements. A reporter had gone back to Alabama Street and this time the paper's reporting humanized the Poles by using names. "Maria Watuszack, the fifth child that has died in the Alabama-[S]treet tenement, was buried yesterday," the story reported in the lead.[10] The reporter, describing the scene inside the tenement, painted a picture of human misery: "The window and blinds were tightly closed. In one corner lay a dirty babe upon the floor, with a pillow for a bed. The child seemed to be dead."

In another corner of the room, the reporter saw six more children resting on pillow beds. "The reporter threw open the window, and two children opened their glassy eyes, and looked up in a weary way. Their faces were as pale as death. ... The reporter knelt beside the second child, which held out its little hand as if to show its gratitude for a breath of air. Its brow was hot and feverish, and death will soon claim it. One of the Police Inspectors, the only official who seems to be taking any interest in the matter at present, said that the child would probably die before noon."

Besides the powerful narrative of suffering and death, this article also showed that the paper's focus now had shifted from onlooker to participant. The *News* was going to do more than simply call on citizens to take action, it was going to act on behalf of a constituency that had no other voice and force the city fathers to help these people by demanding official action. The *News* contacted A.H. Briggs, a city physician, and asked if he had done anything to help the immigrants. The description of the conversation showed not only the city's lack of urgency, but the *News*' sense of outrage. "The doctor knocked the ashes from a fragrant maduro and said: -- 'My hands are tied by the City Council, who are slow to act in the matter.' A reporter contacted members of the Board of Health and reported that one meeting had been held but "nothing at all definite had been done."[11]

In the same issue, the *News* added its editorial voice to the crusade. Taking on the role of community conscience, the *News* issued the challenge not only to government officials, but to its readers as well. "What has become of Buffalo's boasted charity that poor immigrants are permitted to start in our midst without efforts being made to alleviate their suffering? Is this right, just or human? We put this question to every man in Buffalo that has a heart."[12]

The next day's editions, June 17, reported that the *News* campaign had spurred at least some city officials into action. The paper carried a story in column three at the top of page one headlined, "MOVING AT LAST." It was one of five page-one stories on the Poles. The *News* reported that on the previous night the council committee in charge of dealing with the Poles "woke up ... and made some progress -- halting and inadequate, but still encouraging -- toward the fulfillment of their trust."[13] The Council had approved building a barracks on Rich Street in the city's Fifth Ward and moving the Polish immigrants there. In the same edition, the *News* continued to hammer away at the filthy conditions the Poles were enduring, not only on Alabama Street, but in other tenements on other blocks. It also reported on the death of a three-year old girl that morning in the Alabama Street tenement, the seventh death reported by the *News* since its crusade began, and said her nine-year-old sister did not have long to live.

The editions of June 17 also reflected the beginning of a slight shift in the *News'* attitude toward the victims that showed the difficulty Butler faced in finding a middle ground between conducting a campaign for reform and keeping the good will of his working class readers who had little good will toward the Polish immigrants. The heart-wrenching news stories and editorials now were accompanied by questions as to how much of their plight the Poles had brought on themselves. The last article at the bottom of the page said the Poles were partly to blame for their plight. The story said one reason for the deaths was the Poles' "ignorance of the English language and their inability to follow the instructions of the district physicians." The story ended, however, with the Poles still being pictured as victims. The reporter quoted a policeman on the scene who had noted that medicines were being misused by the immigrants, who could not read the instructions on the vials. "It's nothing but murder to allow these people to administer their medicines in this way," the policeman said.[14]

After June 17, the *News* continued to appeal to the emotions of its readers with accounts of more deaths and scenes of desperation, such as one Polish family that was forced to eat rotten apples to survive. It also refused to cater to the prejudicial stereotypes about the Poles being lazy, reporting on Polish women busily making overalls at six and a half cents apiece. The women said they were able to make only four per day.[15]

But it became increasingly clear that Butler had taken his newspaper down a road that relatively few of his readers were ready to follow. Mayor Alexander Brush sensed no popular groundswell of opinion for the Poles, and thus felt no political pressure to jump on the *News'* bandwagon. He was approached by a *News* reporter and asked for his opinion on the "Polish question which is exciting considerable discussion among public men of our city." Brush responded: "I have not given the matter much attention. I am very busy with pressing official business. I read the newspaper accounts very carefully, but as I said before, I am too busy to inquire into the matter."[16]

Just below the account of the mayor's comments was a story on a Trades' Assembly meeting of several unions. Although the unions supported the *News'* drive for more humane conditions for the Poles, it was clear that the union men would have been just as happy if the immigrants had never come to Buffalo in the first place. The resolution said the "Polacks" were a menace to the health and prosperity of our people and blamed unscrupulous rail and steamship companies that lured Polish immigrants to America with tales of wealth. After taking the immigrants' money for transit, they were taken to America "to the detriment of the cities on which they are thrown as a burden," said the resolution.[17] It was a sign of how alone the *News* felt that it pointed to this resolution as evidence of support for its campaign.

Mayor Brush's unwillingness to join the *News* crusade reflected the reality that standing up for the Poles was politically dangerous, even with the newspaper providing cover. Events three days before his interview with the *News* reporter had provided ample evidence of just how far out in front of its readers the *News* had gone. On Sunday, June 19, a group of Fifth Ward residents destroyed the barracks that was being built on Rich Street. In reporting on the vandals' raid the night before, Monday's *News* acknowledged the ward's "bitter dislike to the Poles" "The residents don't like it, and I can't blame them," said the Rev. Father Heiter, pastor of a Catholic church at Rich and Genesee streets. "There are enough pigpens there now. I would like to see the whole of the Polack crowd sent to the workhouse. It is the place for them."[18]

The mood among some city officials mirrored the anger of their constituents. Alderman John White proposed that city money be used to send the Poles to Dunkirk or "other points west" instead of being appropriated to rebuild the destroyed barracks. While the Poles remained in Buffalo, he said, they were a menace to working men who were losing jobs to the immigrants who would accept work for two dollars a day. The other newspapers in town either ignored the story or echoed the popular sentiment. The *Commercial Advertiser* handled the story on June 18 with three inches in which it reported the deaths and sickness with a neutral disdain. The *Courier* simply said the problem was the Poles themselves and the threat they posed in spreading a "pestilential epidemic." It said "a fresh and great evil is staring (Buffalo) in the face by the extraordinary influx of Polish emigrants (sic). The all-absorbing question is what shall be done with the Poles that they may be taught to comply with sanitary laws and live in decency."[19]

It seems unlikely that Butler would have been immune to the sentiment of city officials, other newspapers and particularly the many readers he depended upon for the success of his newspaper. On the day that the *News* reported the barracks raid on page one, it subtly shifted its editorial stand toward the Poles. Instead of asking whether the plight of the wretched immigrants was "right, just or human," as it had at the start of the campaign, the *News* took a less lofty tone. It now was more concerned with the health threat to its readers than it was about the plight of the Poles themselves. "The work of cleaning out the pest-breeding Polack tenement is only begun," the *News* said in an editorial. "Only half a dozen families, out of as many hundred, have been moved, and the building now in process of construction (the editorial had obviously been written before the barracks was destroyed) will scarcely hold the over flow from one of the wretched human hives. ... Nothing but hot weather is needed to spread pestilence over Buffalo." The editorial also called for a national system of quarantine and echoed the trade unions' complaint against the railroad and land companies that lured immigrants to America. "The city of Buffalo is the greatest sufferer now from the present system of immigration and should take the initiative to avert its growing evils."[20]

Even the news columns began to take on a meaner tone. One doctor who had worked among the Poles for years said, "You'll find they're pretty much all alike. ... They're all unmitigated

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tricksters ... and they drink like fish."[21] Next to that story was a letter to the editor, printed at the top of page one and signed only with the initials of H.D., which said, "These lazy Polacks will not work."[22]

The campaign essentially ended with the editions of June 24. Although the lead story reported attacks on the houses of two Polish families on Fitzgerald Street in the First Ward, the other stories told about a building boom of new houses for the Poles. Under the headline, "Practical Men Find a Way to Solve the Polish Problem," the *News* reported that businessmen were building new cottages in the Fifth Ward for the Poles, and that the barracks for Polish tenement dwellers was about to be completed on Park road, between Lovejoy Street and Broadway.

Journalism often can be explained as mutual exploitation. Certainly the Poles benefitted from the *News'* crusade to improve their living conditions. But the crusade, the first major effort undertaken by Butler with his new evening paper, established the *News* as a community power. Fighting for an unpopular cause to help a class of people widely held in disdain, the *News* was able to effect changes despite a lack of sympathy on the part of the city's leading politicians and many of its residents. Although Butler took a bit less noble stand towards the end of the crusade, he still fought for reform when others were willing to ignore the problem.

Moreover, in waging the kind of campaign that Butler fought for the Poles in 1881, he was largely forging a new trail. Most journalism histories place the start of the muckraking era in the 1890s, especially with Jacob A. Riis' work exposing the horrid conditions in New York City tenements. Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World* conducted campaigns exposing dreadful conditions for the poor in 1883.[23] Because historians have concentrated on big-city journalism, especially in New York City, Butler has been denied the historical acclaim he deserves for being among the first "muckrakers."

One can sense the battle that Butler was waging within himself during the Polish crusade. The harsher tone toward the end of the campaign may well have been the result of the businessman winning out over the newspaperman. A paper that alienated a large corps of its readers would not be a viable newspaper very long. Butler was a newspaper businessman before he was a reformer, and clearly lacked the reformist zeal of the progressives who would follow him later in the century. When he died in 1914, he was among the last of the publisher-editors of big-city newspapers. The publisher in him never would give free reign to the editor.

The tension between his better angels and his bottom line is clear in two editorials, both running on June 22. The first one read: "In dealing with the poor Poles the people of Buffalo should not lose sight of the fact that Kosciusko and Pulaski came to this country in its hour of trouble when it needed men and stood by it when bullets instead of bread were given to its friends." A few inches under that, this editorial ran: "Alderman

(John) White objects to maintaining the Polish immigrants at the city's expense, and the point he makes is this: -- While these hundreds of unemployed men remain in the city they are a standing menace to labor and prevent laboring men from receiving the pay they should get for their services. ... It must be confessed that there is much logic in the argument of the Alderman for the First."[24] Although Butler could not be called a true progressive, his *Buffalo Evening News* helped lead the way for newspapers to comment on the human costs of an increasingly industrialized society.

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Notes

1. Alfred H. Kirchhofer, History,of The Buffalo Evening News, chapter on circulation, p. 18. Kirchhofer was the former editor of *The Evening News* who was working on a history of the paper before illness forced him to abandon the project. His unfinished and unpublished manuscript is located in The Butler Collection in the Buffalo State College archives.

2. Ibid, chapter on EHB Sr., p. 12.

3. Kirchhofer, History, chapter on EHB, Sr., p. 12.

4. Brenda K. Shelton, Reformers in Search of Yesterday, Buffalo in the 1890s, State University of New York Press, 1976, p. 197.

5. Michael Schudson, Discovering the News, Basic Books, Inc., 1978, p. 97.

6. Richard C. Brown and Bob Watson, Buffalo, Lake City in Niagara Land, Windsor Publications, Inc., sponsored by the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, 1981, p. 122.

7. Shelton, Reformers, p.7.

8. Ibid, p.30; Truman C. White, Our County and its People, A descriptive Work on Erie County, New York, The Boston History Company, 1898, p. 427.

9. Michael Dillon, "Anatomy of a Crusade: Reform, Independent Politics and the *Buffalo Evening News*' Polish Crusade of 1881, academic paper presented at the Mid-Atlantic Popular/American Culture Association, October 28, 1994, p.4; The *Buffalo Evening News*, June 15, 1881.

10. The *Buffalo Evening News*, July 16, 1881.

11. Ibid.

12. Ibid.

13. The *Buffalo Evening News*, June 17, 1881.

14. Ibid.

15. The *Buffalo Evening News*, June 18, 1881.

16. The *Buffalo Evening News*, June 22, 1881.

17. Ibid.

18. The *Buffalo Evening News,* June 20, 1881.

19. The Buffalo *Courier,* June 20, 1881.

20. The *Buffalo Evening News,* June 20, 1881.

21. The *Buffalo Evening News,* June 23, 1881.

22. Ibid.

23. Dillon, "Anatomy," p. 6.

24. The *Buffalo Evening News,* June 22, 1881.

The Work that Came Before Art:

Willa Cather's Journalism, 1893-1912

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A submission to the American Journalism Historians Association,
for its annual convention, October 3-5, 1996, London, Ontario

ABSTRACT

"The Work that Came Before Art:
Willa Cather's Journalism, 1893-1912"

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Willa Cather is generally remembered as a novelist who immortalized the immigrant settlers of the American heartland. Her fiction--beginning with her first major novel, *O Pioneers!*, published in 1913--was celebrated as something fresh and new in American literature. But Cather herself had been developing her voice and her material for two decades in her work as a journalist. Between 1893 and 1912, she was employed as a newspaper and magazine writer and editor in Lincoln (Nebraska), Pittsburgh, and New York. It was through this first profession--which she thought of as "work"--that she matured personally and professionally and made the industry contacts that would enable her to be successful at her art. This paper examines this period as a significant career in itself, maintaining that Cather's editorial work was distinguished in both quantity and quality. It further illustrates the clear connections between Cather's experiences in journalism and the content of her fiction.

The Work that Came Before Art:

Willa Cather's Journalism, 1893-1912

The 1913 publication of Willa Cather's second novel, *O Pioneers!*, established her as a major American writer and created her reputation as a novelist of the prairie, a fresh voice writing of the heartland in an era when most acclaimed novels were urban stories. While Cather's voice *was* new in American fiction, it did not come from a novice writer. It was a voice that had grown mature and articulate over the course of her first career, her two decades as a journalist during which she had not only developed her writing style, but also identified her primary subject matter.

Between 1893 and 1912, Willa Cather worked as a newspaper and magazine writer and editor in Lincoln (Nebraska), Pittsburgh, and New York. During these years she produced a body of journalism that was distinguished in both its quantity and its quality. Cather herself later downplayed her journalistic writing and editing--"what I call work," she told a friend[1]--as simply a means of earning money until she could afford to live for her art. She frequently used pseudonyms on her articles and reviews. Yet a close examination of the newspaper and magazine articles she wrote and edited during her early years reveals what pride she took in this "work" at the time. And her letters from that period reveal how much she enjoyed the feeling of editorial power, whether that power was achieved through running a magazine, rewriting and prioritizing stories at a newspaper, or expressing her opinions in her own newspaper and magazine columns.

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[1] Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant, *Willa Cather: A Memoir* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1992), 122.

In her most productive years as a newspaper reporter, one biographer estimates, Cather averaged over a quarter of a million words annually.[2] James Woodress speculates that during her two decades in journalism "she probably turned out more copy than appears in all of her collected works of the following thirty-five years."[3] During this period she wrote journalistic nonfiction for five newspapers and four magazines. She also worked as an editor at two of those newspapers and two of those magazines, notably *McClure's*, where she was managing editor from 1908 to 1912.

This paper surveys this period in Cather's life--a significant career in itself--and argues that her work as a journalist was directly related to her emergence as one of America's most important novelists.

The Journalist in Lincoln and Pittsburgh

Willa Cather's journalism career was launched in 1893 when, while still a junior at the University of Nebraska, she began writing regularly for the *Nebraska State Journal*. From then until she left Nebraska in 1896, she contributed nearly 300 articles to the *Journal* and another local daily newspapers, the *Lincoln Courier*, covering a wide range of subject matter but focusing on theatrical and literary criticism. After moving to Pittsburgh, she continued her work as a critic and a reporter for another decade, with more than 100 of her articles appearing in the daily *Pittsburg* (sic) *Leader* and other publications.[4]

As Bernice Slote has noted, many of the characters and settings that would appear in

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[2] Mildred Bennett, Introduction, *Willa Cather's Collected Short Fiction, 1892-1912*, Virginia Faulkner, ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965), xvii.

[3] James Woodress, *Willa Cather: A Literary Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 89.

[4] The majority of Cather's newspaper work has been reprinted in *The Kingdom of Art: Willa Cather's First Principles and Critical Statements, 1893-1896*, Bernice Slote, ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966), and *The World and the Parish: Willa Cather's Articles and Reviews, 1893-1902*, William Curtin, ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1970).

Cather's fiction first appeared in her nonfiction features and reviews. Furthermore, Cather's earliest newspaper columns--her "work"--contained clear declarations of the themes, beliefs, and standards that would shape her fiction--her "art."

As early as 1894, when she was only twenty-one, Cather wrote in her newspaper theater criticism: "The people of this century have a right to demand something that . . . touches their everyday life . . . . We do not want old wine in new bottles nor new wine in old bottles, we want the tragedy and comedy of life as we find it, in the clothes we wear and in the language we speak."[5] Four years later, at twenty-five, as a literary critic for a Pittsburgh newspaper, she argued that "The artist is bound to his native soil more closely than the serf who plods in the furrow."[6]

As a young journalist in Lincoln, Cather frequently wrote "sketches" of local characters and events that interested or moved her. In these essay-like columns, characters who would later people Cather's fiction made their first appearances, notes Phyllis Robinson: "a businessman who might have been a writer save for an unsympathetic wife, a crazed evangelist on a small-town street, a German fiddler playing for a dance. Clubwomen and drifters, all the small-town types Willa knew so well, are there in embryo."[7]

The bulk of Cather's work for the Lincoln papers, however, was arts criticism. She reviewed theater, literature, art, and music. The well-read young woman was so informed--and prolific--that within two years she acquired a national reputation, "recognized in theatrical circles throughout the country as one of the leading drama critics in the west . . . . in production and distinction she was the equal of metropolitan critics."[8]

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[5] Willa Cather, *Nebraska State Journal*, February 25, 1894, 9, and December 16, 1894, 13, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 96-97.

[6] Cather, *Pittsburg* (sic) *Leader*, March 4, 1898, 8, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 582-84.

[7] Phyllis C. Robinson, *Willa: The Life of Willa Cather* (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 48.

As a critic, Cather was not shy in expressing her opinions, and she was merciless when a performer failed to impress her. Her managing editor at the *Nebraska State Journal*, Will Owen Jones, later remembered that "many an actor wondered on coming to Lincoln what would appear the next morning from the pen of that meat-ax young girl."[9] In one review, she reported that an actress "delivered the most histrionic lines with correct eluction and unalterable calm, just as though she were ordering clam chowder and baked whitefish."[10] Cather was full of praise for many of the late-nineteenth-century stars who came to Nebraska, including Clara Morris, Julia Marlowe, and Sarah Bernhardt, yet she called the immensely popular actress Lillie Langtry a talentless "fool" and a "harlequin" and proclaimed Oscar Wilde's 1893 play, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, "driveling . . . . no better than the very bad plays of the world, only sillier."[11]

More revealing of her own later artistic standards was Cather's criticism of literature and music. While admiring George du Maurier's controversial novel *Trilby*, she focused on the fact that his first literary triumph came at age fifty, offering proof that "The talent for writing is largely the talent for living . . . . An author must . . . . have experiences that cannot be got out of a classical dictionary or even in polite society."[12] Writing about Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* (from which she would later take the phrase "O Pioneers!" as the title of her first major novel), she insisted, "He is so full of hardiness and of the joy of life . . . . He has no code but to be natural, a code that this complex world has so long outgrown."

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[8] Bernice Slote, "First Principles: Writer in Nebraska," *The Kingdom of Art*, 3-4. While this reputation reflects Cather's writing talent at a young age, she was also fortunate to be in Lincoln, a rapidly growing city (population 30,000) and a major railroad center. It was, according to James Woodress, "a convenient stop for first-rate theatrical and musical companies on their way to Denver and San Francisco" (65) and was on the itineraries of most of the nearly 500 theatrical companies then on tour, as well as many opera singers.

[9] Will Owen Jones, [editorial] *Nebraska State Journal*, November 21, 1921, quoted in *The World and the Parish*, 60-61.

[10] Cather, *Nebraska State Journal*, April 25, 1895, 8, rpt. in *The Kingdom of Art*, 139.

[11] Cather, various *Nebraska State Journal* articles appearing in 1893 and 1894, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 35-49, 65-66, 89-92.

[12] Cather, *Nebraska State Journal*, October 14, 1894, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 128.

Though she herself was never musical, Cather took artistic cues from musicians, who would appear as major and minor characters in some of her later stories and novels. Of mezzo-soprano Helena von Doenhoff, Cather noted, "When a singer can feel strongly and make others feel, then her voice is merely an instrument upon which a higher thing than even melody does its will."[13] In 1894, she wrote an enthusiastic review of a mentally-disabled, sightless African American pianist named "Blind Tom," who had a vast classical repertoire: "It was as if the soul of a Beethoven had slipped into the body of an idiot." (Twenty-four years later he would reappear in the character of Blind d'Arnault in her novel *My Antonia*.)[14]

Cather's Lincoln newspaper work reveals an early conviction that art should be accessible to all people. Writing primarily about the urban east, Cather complained in an 1896 column:

> This year all the greatest artists of foreign lands are among us, artists whom to hear and see is an education, yet the pleasure and profit of seeing them is confined almost entirely to people from Wall Street and Fifth Avenue . . . while the struggling, ambitious youth of the country is practically shut out. That even art should be restricted to the men of dollars is one of the most bitterly unfair things in a very unjust state of affairs.[15]

Such a position at first seems curious coming from a well-educated young woman whose newspaper columns favored Wagner over Sousa and Shakespeare over Uncle Tom shows. But it makes sense if one thinks of Cather as the creator of fictional characters who are accomplished musicians--and often immigrants living in rural poverty.[16]

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[13] Cather, *Nebraska State Journal*, December 9, 1894, 4, rpt. in *The Kingdom of Art*, 132.

[14] Cather, *Nebraska State Journal*, May 18, 1894, 6, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 166-67. The story of Blind d'Arnault is told on pp. 180-92 of Cather's *My Antonia* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1918).

[15] Cather, *Nebraska State Journal*, March 8, 1896, 13, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 255.

Cather was "a widely-admired newspaperwoman in her own state"[17] by 1896, the year she was invited to address the women's portion of the Nebraska Press Association convention. A reporter covering the event for the Omaha *World-Herald* wrote, "If there is a woman in Nebraska newspaper work who is destined to win a reputation for herself, that woman is Willa Cather."[18] This prediction would be fulfilled as Cather moved east, first to Pittsburgh and then to New York.

The decade Cather spent in Pittsburgh, from 1896 to 1906, was one of high productivity. She published 27 short stories (more than half of her lifetime story output), her first book of poetry (*April Twilights* in 1903), and her first story collection (*The Troll Garden* in 1905). Yet her primary work in this city was journalism. For her first five years in Pittsburgh, she supported herself solely--and quite successfully--through journalism and for the first time demonstrated the true range of her versatility in the field: in just half a decade, she worked as an editor for two publications and as a reporter for at least eight. Even during the five years when she taught high school there (supposedly a "break" from the demands of journalism, so that she could concentrate on her fiction) she continued to write newspaper and magazine articles on a freelance basis. Her work as a Pittsburgh journalist allowed her to continue to polish her writing, and to see it published in a variety of forums. It also inspired her future fiction and provided professional contacts that would propel her literary career forward.

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[16] Most readers believe that such characters first appeared in Cather's famous novels of the second decade of the next century, *O Pioneers!* and *My Antonia*. In fact, however, one is found in her very first short story, "Peter," written in 1892. Its title character, Peter Sadelack, is a Bohemian immigrant, once a concert violinist in Europe but now a poor Nebraska farmer, who commits suicide when his son decides to sell his violin. Out of this story would come the subplot of the suicide of Mr. Shimerda in *My Antonia*. "Peter" was published in *The Mahogany Tree*, May 21, 1892, 323-24, and is reprinted in *Willa Cather's Collected Short Fiction*, 541-43; Woodress, 76.

[17] Slote, "First Principles: Writer in Nebraska," 3.

[18] Mrs. Elia W. Peattie, "Newspaper Women in Nebraska," rpt. in Henry Allen Brainerd, *History of the Nebraska Press Association (1859-1923)*, II, 23-32, quoted in Slote, 27. In her speech, which was titled "How to Make a Newspaper Interesting," Cather told the audience that good newspaper writing must go beyond the dishing out of facts and instead offer personal, interested commentary (Slote, 27, based on accounts of the speech and the press association meeting in the *Nebraska State Journal*, January 31 and February 1, 1896 and the (Beatrice, Neb.) *Weekly Express*, February 6, 1896).

Cather initially moved to Pittsburgh to accept the editorship of a new women's magazine, *Home Monthly*, meant to be an imitation of the successful *Ladies' Home Journal*, which was being edited by Edward Bok in Philadelphia. Though her title was managing editor--the publisher, Pittsburgh businessman James Axtell, held the title of editor--Cather was in charge. *Home Monthly* was billed as a "family" magazine and sold for five cents a copy; its circulation, limited to the greater Pittsburgh area, was about 22,000. Cather's salary was $100 a month, a considerable jump, in just three years, from her pay rate of $1 per column at the *Nebraska State Journal*.[19] Axtell had known of Cather's acclaim as a rising arts critic but had hired her for another aspect of her reputation: that of the hard-working, prolific, eager professional "who could take over the whole show at a moment's notice--and edit, write, proof, even typeset entire issues by herself."[20]

Cather did precisely this, acting as editor to freelance contributors but also writing a great deal of the magazine herself, both fiction and nonfiction, much of it pseudonymously.[21] Her first

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[19] Cather's *Home Monthly* salary is mentioned in Woodress, 115. Her rate at the *Nebraska State Journal* is confirmed in a letter of reminiscence Cather wrote to the newspaper's managing editor, Will Owen Jones, d. March 22, 1927, on the occasion of the paper's sixtieth anniversary.

[20] Peter Benson, "Willa Cather at *Home Monthly*," *Biography: An Interdisciplinary Quarterly* 4.3 (summer 1981), 229.

[21] Cather described her duties, and the extent of her writing for the magazine, in a letter, d. July 13, 1896, to her friend Mariel Gere in Lincoln (Gere Family Collection, Nebraska State Historical Society, Lincoln, Neb., Microfilm MS302, ser. 2). Among the pseudonyms she used in the magazine were Henry Nicklemann, Helen Delay, Elizabeth L. Seymour (the name of a cousin of hers), Charles Douglass (her father's and brohter's names), John Esten, Mary K. Hawley, Clara Wood Shipman (Cather's own initials switched around), Gilberta S. Whittle, Emily Vantell, John Charles Asten, Mildred Beardslee, Mary Temple Bayard, Mary D. Manning, Marie Catherson, Ina Bervoot, and Lawrence Brinton. She also wrote unsigned articles. Sources: Virginia Faulker, Publisher's Forward, *The World and the Parish*, xv; Curtin, 306-07; Robinson, 85; Sharon O'Brien, *Willa Cather: The Emerging Voice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 230; and Kathleen D. Byrne and Richard C. Snyder, *Chrysalis: Willa Cather in Pittsburgh, 1896-1906*

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major nonfiction contribution to the magazine was a set of profiles, written under the byline Mary K. Hawley, of Mrs. William McKinley and Mrs. William Jennings Bryan, the wives of the 1896 Presidential candidates. Cather used personal information supplied by friends in Lincoln to describe the Nebraskan Bryan, whom she called "the New Woman."[22] Cather also drew on her Nebraska newspaper columns to fill the fiction pages of *Home Monthly*: the Nebraska town of Brownville, the subject of one of her 1894 newspaper features, became the setting for her story "A Resurrection," while the Dovey sisters, child singers she had covered as a reviewer in Lincoln, inspired another short story, "The Prodigies."[23]

Despite her work load at *Home Monthly*, Cather found time to freelance for a daily newspaper, the *Pittsburg* (sic)[24] *Leader*, which in the summer of 1897 offered her a full-time job, at $75 a month, as an arts critic. She accepted but, when the *Leader's* telegraph editor left, applied for that higher-paying job, even though, as Phyllis Robinson notes, "she knew her age, sex and inexperience were all against her." She was given a tryout and got the job, which occupied her during the day; at night, she continued to do reviewing work, for which the *Leader* paid her extra.[25] In her staff work at the *Leader*, writes James Woodress, Cather's job was to

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(Pittsburgh: Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 1980), 7.

[22] Mary K. Hawley [Cather], "Two Women the World Is Watching," *Home Monthly*, September 1896, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 309-13. Cather's excitement about the Bryan profile and her request for specific information are outlined in her letter to Mariel Gere, d. July 13, 1896.

[23] Cather's newspaper article on Brownville appeared in the *Nebraska State Journal*, August 12, 1894, 13, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 103-12; "A Resurrection" (in which she used the name of the real town) appeared in *Home Monthly*, April 1897 and is reprinted in *Collected Short Fiction*, 425-39. Her newspaper review of the Dovey sisters appeared in the *Lincoln Courier*, September 14, 1895, rpt. in *The Kingdom of Art*, 145-47; "The Prodigies" ran in *Home Monthly*, July 1897 and is reprinted in *Collected Short Fiction*, 411-23.

[24] Around the turn of the century, some institutions in the city of Pittsburgh still used an earlier spelling of the city's name, without an "h" at the end; the *Leader* was one of them.

[25] The initial job offer and salary are confirmed in a letter Cather wrote to Will Owen Jones, n. d. ("Tuesday") 1897; her hours as telegraph editor and the promise of extra pay for reviews are confirmed in a letter to Mariel Gere, n. d. ("Sunday") 1897. Both letters are in the Gere Family Collection, Nebraska State Historical Society. The quote is from Phyllis Robinson, 92.

> edit and expand foreign cables. Foreign correspondents in those days did not file complete stories . . . . a brief cable would come announcing the birth of a prospective duke of Marlborough and she would then have to supply a short history of the house. She also had to winnow the wheat from the chaff out of the vast amount of news that crossed her desk.

Woodress adds that she enjoyed the exciting and constantly challenging pace of editing work on a daily newspaper ("her copy was absolutely irrevocable once it went up the penumatic tube to the linotype operators"). She also liked being considered "one of the fellows."[26]

Cather was devoting at least as much attention to her journalistic writing. The articles she turned out for several publications--including *Home Monthly*, for which she was still freelancing, and the Lincoln papers, to which she regularly mailed submissions--increased her versatility. As Phyllis Robinson notes, she had three very different audiences: "the housewives who read the *Home Monthly* for its high-minded tone . . . ; the more sophisticated readers of the *Leader*, who appreciated her wide-ranging knowledge of music and the theater; and the people back home in Nebraska who wanted a taste of what life was like in a big city . . . ."[27]

Cather sometimes wrote about political events if they stirred a sense of romance or tragedy in her. One example is a piece she wrote for the *Lincoln Courier* about the funeral procession of a Pittsburgh soldier killed on the battleship *Maine* when it was sunk near Havana in 1898. This poetic description of the event offers interesting evidence that--despite Cather's often-expressed contempt for commercial journalism--her editorial technique was sometimes not much different from that of her peers at the "yellower" newspapers in New York:

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[26] Woodress, 131. He attributes this information to a letter Cather wrote to a friend in Lincoln, Louise Pound, d. September 7, 1987.

[27] Robinson, 89.

> Young and old men, laborers and capitalists, stood bare-headed, shoulder to shoulder; women held their babies high and men lifted their little sons to their shoulders to let them see that low gun carriage as it passed. The procession passed on across the bridge, down the river to the old Uniondale Cemetery; through the ways where many a time he had scampered when a boy, they bore the hero home.
>
> Is it any wonder that here in the streets, in the markets, in the foyers of the theatres, in the vestibules of the churches, in the glowing mills where stripped to the waist they hammer out the iron plates for battleships, men talk of war?[28]

During February of 1898, Cather spent at least a week in New York writing theater criticism for *The New York Sun* while its regular critic was ill. That work was unsigned and has not been identified, but William Curtin notes that the trip "clearly suggests that Cather was beginning to make a reputation in the East." She must have gained the confidence of some performers as well, since while she in New York she secured an interview with the famous actress Helen Modjeska (who later showed up as a party guest in Cather's 1926 novel *My Mortal Enemy*) before reviewing her in the play *Mary Stuart*.[29] She also attended the farewell performance of the opera singer Nellie

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[28] Cather, *Lincoln Courier*, April 23, 1898, 3, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 544-46.

[29] Curtin attributes this information to a letter, d. June 7, 1898, that Cather wrote to "the Class of 1895 Secretary, University of Nebraska (420-21). James Woodress writes that the *Sun* subsequently offered her a job, which she declined because, at the time, she didn't want to leave Pittsburgh (135). Cather's letter to Mariel Gere, d. March 7, 1898, refers to this trip to New York and the meeting with Modjeska. In *My Mortal Enemy* (1926; New York: Vintage, 1990), Modjeska is present at the Myra Henshawe's New Year's Eve party, looking "no less queenly than when I had seen her in Chicago as Marie Stuart . . . ." (37).

Melba at the Metropolitan Opera House. Her article--sent back to the *Lincoln Courier*--shows a reviewer as much interested in the audience and atmosphere as in the music:

> That impetuous, insistent, peremptory applause was new to me. Nothing like it is ever heard in the provinces; it goes to your head; you feel as though you were at a fire or triumph of a conqueror . . . . [Melba] came back and back and back and shook her head most vehemently; but it did no good . . . . It was the first time I had ever seen flowers thrown promiscuously upon the stage. The men in the boxes rose as when a royal personage enters, and the women pulled the violets from their corsages and threw them at her.

Cather would reproduce this 1898 scene in her 1915 novel, *The Song of the Lark*, in Thea Kronborg's triumphant performance of *Seiglinde*, after which "The audience kept up its clamour until . . . . Kronborg came before the curtain alone. The house met her with a greeting that was almost savage in its fierceness . . . ."[30]

Divas similar to Melba would appear in some of Cather's short stories as well, including "A Singer's Romance" (1900) and "A Gold Slipper" (1917). Another classical musician Cather covered and befriended in Pittsburgh, the pianist and composer Ethelbert Nevin, was the subject of a profile Cather published in *The Ladies' Home Journal* in 1900 and became the model for two of her short stories, "A Death in the Desert" (1903) and "Uncle Valentine" (1925).[31]

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[30] The Melba review appeared in the *Lincoln Courier*, March 19, 1898, 2, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 417-19. The quote from *The Song of the Lark* (1915; Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988) is on p. 408.

[31] "A Singer's Romance" appeared in *The Library*, July 28, 1900, and is reprinted in *Collected Short Fiction*, 333-38. "A Gold Slipper," *Harper's*, January 1917, and is reprinted in *Willa Cather: Stories, Poems, and Other Writings* (New York: Literary Classics Series, 1992), 433-49. Cather's profile of Nevin, "The Man Who Wrote 'Narcissus,'" appeared in *The Ladies' Home Journal*, November 1900, and is reprinted in *The World and the Parish*, 634-37. Nevin was the inspiration for the composer/pianist character Adriance Hilgarde in "A Death in the

Cather resigned from her job as telegraph editor for the *Leader* in the spring of 1900. That same year, she made her first major sale of fiction, placing her story "Eric Hermannson's Soul" in *Cosmoplitan* with an editor she had met while working for *Home Monthly*. She spent the next five years teaching high school English in Pittsburgh but continued to freelance for a number of magazines and newspapers. In *The Library*, a new literary magazine based in Pittsburgh, she published more than two dozen pieces of criticism, as well as well a pseudonymous article, "The Personal Side of William Jennings Bryan," after the Nebraska politician had received his second Presidential nomination.[32]

She also continued to write for the Lincoln newspapers. One of these contributions was a remarkable change from her usual focus on the arts. It was a long article, prompted by the July 1901 steelworkers' strike against the newly-formed U. S. Steel Corporation, in which Cather vividly described the miserable existence of the men and women who lived in Homestead, Pennsylvania, a town near Pittsburgh where another violent strike had occurred in 1892. Cather's detailed and damning description of the town is similar to the type of journalism that would later appear in such "muckraking" magazines as *McClure's*--for instance, in Lincoln Steffens' 1903 "Shame of the Cities" series (which included Pittsburgh):

> In this collection of wretched habitations dwell nearly two thousand mill workers: Huns, Slavs, Poles, Italians, Russians and Negroes . . . . One six-room boarding house reported seventy inmates, some of the

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Desert,"*Scribner's*, January 1903, 109-21 (reprinted in *Collected Short Fiction*, 199-217) and the title character Valentine Ramsay in "Uncle Valentine," *Woman's Home Companion*, February-March, 1925 (reprinted in *Uncle Valentine and Other Stories: Willa Cather's Uncollected Short Fiction, 1915-1929*, Bernice Slote, ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1973)).

[32] The Bryan article appeared in the July 14, 1900 issue of *The Library*, 13-15, and is reprinted in *The World and the Parish*, 782-89. Bylined "Henry Nicklemann," this feature was--like Cather's *Home Monthly* profile of Mrs. Bryan--based on information she gathered through friends in Lincoln and included parts of the earlier article on his wife.

> rooms accommodating twenty lodgers. This, of course, is only made possible by the twelve-hour shift system. Every bed does double duty, and every floor is a bed . . . . No one house is ever occupied by a single family, even when the children run above a dozen in number . . . .[33]

This column is notable not only for its foreshadowing of turn-of-the-century "reform journalism"--in which, Cather would later insist, she had little interest--but also for her sympathy for the immigrants who did not find the ideal life they thought awaited them in America. The latter theme would play a large part in her best fiction.

Managing Editor of *McClure's*

Cather continued to publish her short fiction in magazines while she wrote nonfiction and taught high school in Pittsburgh. But her career took a significant turn in 1903, when she met S. S. McClure, whose crusading magazine was making him a major player in the publishing business. Cather had sent several of her short stories to *McClure's* only to have them summarily rejected. But when her friend Will Owen Jones, her former boss at the *Nebraska State Journal*, mentioned her work to H. H. McClure--a cousin of S. S. who was involved in the book division of the McClure Publishing Company--he intervened on her behalf, and S. S. invited her to resubmit the works directly to him. A week after she sent them, in May of 1903, he asked her to come to the New York offices of the magazine to meet with him.

That meeting, which lasted two hours, resulted in McClure's promise to publish her work and to issue a collection of her stories in book form as well (*The Troll Garden* appeared later that year). Cather wrote a thankful letter to Jones, saying that the experience had effected a permanent change in her self-image and confessing that McClure's personality had "taken hold" of her.[34]

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[33] Cather, "The Real Homestead," *Lincoln Courier*, August 24, 1901, 2, rpt. in *The World and the Parish*, 955-59.

After their 1903 meeting, McClure remained in touch with Cather, fulfilling his promise by printing two of her stories, "Paul's Case" and "A Sculptor's Funeral," and a number of her poems in *McClure's* over the next two years. At his invitation, she visited the magazine's office several more times and spent two weeks there one summer.[35] During those visits she no doubt got a glimpse of what one biographer described as "the fireworks atmosphere" generated by "The Chief": "McClure, mind spinning like a top, could toss off twenty large ideas in a week, all but one or two . . . impractical or downright fantastic . . . . today's favorite scheme might be discarded tomorrow and the 'greatest editorial idea ever conceived' might take its place."[36]

Ray Stannard Baker, one of the several famous writers on staff during the years just after the turn of the century, considered McClure an "editorial genius" but did not enjoy suffering "the difficulties of temperament which go with genius." Lincoln Steffens, who not only wrote articles but also served a stint as managing editor, complained that it was hard to get much writing done when "my job, the job of all of us, [was to] hold down S. S. . . . . there was always some act of his enthusiasm for us to counteract." Often it was Ida Tarbell, the third member of the magazine's team of muckrakers, who "held down" McClure, acting as intermediary between him and the staff members (and outside writers) he regularly upset, and even covering up his extramarital affairs.[37]

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[34] Cather to Will Owen Jones, d. May 7, 1903. Back home in Nebraska, Jones spread the good news, noting in the May 11, 1903 edition of the *Journal* that "To be taken up by Mr. McClure is counted a decided recognition, and Miss Cather's friends will understand that this means that she has 'arrived'" (quoted in L. Brent Bohlke, ed. *Willa Cather in Person: Interviews, Speeches and Letters* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), xxiii).

[35] Robinson, 122.

[36] Philip Gerber, *Willa Cather* (Boston: Hall, 1975), 47.

[37] Ray Stannard Baker, *American Chronicle: The Autobiography of Ray Stannard Baker* (New York: Scribner's, 1945), 211; Lincoln Steffens, *The Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens* (New York: Harcourt, 1931), 361-63; Peter Lyon, *Success Story: The Life and Times of S. S. McClure* (Deland, Fla.: Everett/Edwards, 1963), 277.

In the spring of 1906, McClure returned from one of his frequent trips to Europe with yet another grand scheme: building on the reputation of the magazine, he would expand the business to include an insurance company, an enlarged book-publishing house, a newspaper syndicate, a correspondence school, a library, a university, and even a chain of banks--all of which would promote each other. The plan was, in the eyes of his staff, not only foolish, but exactly the sort of phenomenon they were trying to expose as journalists, the business trust. In May, Steffens, Baker, and Tarbell, along with several other staff members, submitted their resignations.[38]

McClure suddenly found himself faced with the task of putting out a monthly magazine with his small remaining team and no major players. He thought of Willa Cather, whose ambition and spirit had impressed him during their few meetings. He decided that her talent for writing fiction must mean that she "could be trusted to know a good story when she saw it."[39] He made a trip to Pittsburgh and asked her if she would be willing to join his staff as an editor.

Cather admired McClure--who, like her, was from the midwest--for the very fervor that put off others. She saw immediately that he was the sort of person who "recognized the sacred flame [and] was ready to be burned by it."[40] She had little interest in the kind of investigative journalism for which *McClure's* was known; according to James Woodress, she "found social reformers very dull people . . . . She did not despise the expert investigative reporting that *McClure's* published, but her eye was always on art."[41] What intrigued Cather was the fact that *McClure's* published quality fiction, including the works of Rudyard Kipling, Robert Louis Stevenson, Stephen Crane,

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[38] After leaving *McClure's*, Steffens, Baker, and Tarbell joined the staff of *The American Magazine*.

[39] Louise Bogan, "American-Classic," *The New Yorker*, August 8, 1931, rpt. in James Schroeter, ed., *Willa Cather and Her Critics* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1967), 129.

[40] Sergeant, 48.

[41] Woodress, 188.

Jack London, Bret Harte, Mark Twain, and--her particular idol--Henry James.[42]

Cather also was too ambitious, and too curious about the world, to remain a high school teacher in Pittsburgh. Here was an opportunity not just for possible literary advancement, but also for excitement and status: "To be in the thick of things at *McClure's*, to come to New York, not as a novice struggling for recognition but as a journalist, sought after by the publisher, was a heady proposition," notes Phyllis Robinson.[43]

Her first challenge in her new job was a biography of Christian Science leader Mary Baker G. Eddy. It was scheduled to run serially in the magazine but had arrived so badly written that Cather was assigned to rework it completely. Since the project required significant new research, Cather traveled to Boston to interview Mrs. Eddy several times over the next year (the series ran from early 1907 through the June 1908 issue).[44] During one of these trips, Cather met the writer Sarah Orne Jewett, whose stories she had admired so much she had used them in teaching her high school English classes in Pittsburgh.[45] The two soon became close friends and began a correspondence that lasted until the older writer's death in 1909. Cather would later look back on this meeting as one of the pivotal moments of her literary life.

McClure was pleased with Cather's work on the Eddy biography, and, as its final installments were appearing in the magazine, he promoted her to managing editor. It was an unusually high position for a woman in 1908--the number-two spot on the country's best-known magazine. That summer Cather accompanied McClure and his wife, Hattie, on a trip to Europe. Her mission was to look for new writers and story ideas for the magazine, but she also had the opportunity to see a great deal of theater and opera, and to meet international literary figures.[46] The following year McClure sent her to London for several months, where she attended the funeral of George Meredith, met H. G. Wells, and was a guest in William Butler Yeats' box at the Abbey Theatre.[47] Back in America, Cather was also in distinguished company, buying and publishing fiction from Theodore Dreiser and O. Henry, articles from Progressive reformer Jane Addams, and poetry from Zoe Akins, who in 1935 would win the Pulitzer Prize for playwriting.[48]

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[42] The names of these and other writer published in *McClure's* are listed in Sergeant, 48; Robert K. Miller, Introduction, *Great Short Works of Willa Cather* (New York: Harper, 1989), xiv; and a film produced, directed, and written by Richard Schickel, *Willa Cather's America* (Films for the Humanities/Corp. for Public Broadcasting, 1973).

[43] Robinson, 128.

[44] In his introduction to *The Life of Mary Baker G. Eddy*, bylined "Willa Cather and Georgine Milmine" [the latter being the original author] (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1993), xv-xxviii, David Stouck maintains that this project provided a work model Cather would later repeat: "Willa Cather's relationship to the materials collected by Georgine Milmine was in places not unlike her relation to the materials she gathered herself [two decades later] for writing *Death Comes for the Archbishop*; that is she was fashioning literary portraits from information about historical personages, and turning anecdotal facts into compelling narrative."

[45] Phyllis Martin Hutchinson, "Reminiscences of Willa Cather as a Teacher," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 60.6 (1956), 263-66.

In 1910, when the reform journalist Elizabeth Shepley Sergeant first met Cather in the offices of *McClure's*, she saw "in a flash" the strong connection between the managing editor and her boss: "There was an inspirational quality about the dynamic unspoiled assistant that kept the older editor afloat on his sea of discovery . . . . it made me happy that my first editor . . . could second such a man without his feeling diminished by her powers. She was not a wily female, a diplomat . . .she was one to stand to her colors like a trooper and fight her battles in the open."[49]

But Cather *was*, by necessity--like Ida Tarbell before her--a diplomat, acting as a buffer between her "Chief," who was sixteen years her senior, and the outside world that wanted access to him. Sergeant's first impression confirms the similarity (noted by many Cather scholars) between their relationship and that of Cather's characters Ardessa Devine and "O'Mally" in her 1918 story "Ardessa." In the story, O'Mally is a self-made man who buys a magazine called *The Outcry* and becomes its editor, surrounding himself with a staff of star reporters whose careers are made on the magazine (as was true for Tarbell, Steffens, and Baker). O'Mally is full of ideas; he "went in for everything and got tired of everything; that was why he made a good editor." But he does not like dealing with details or unpleasantness, a job that falls to his secretary, Ardessa Devine:

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[46] Bogan, 130.

[47] Cather's 1909 London trip is mentioned in several sources, including Miller, xv, and E. K. Brown, *Willa Cather: A Critical Biography* (New York: Knopf, 1953), 146-48. According to Brown, the several months she spent there, and the theater she saw and actors and actresses she met, would form the basis for the London section of her first novel, *Alexander's Bridge* (1912; Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1977), which would be published two years later. Miller notes that this and her other trips abroad during the *McClure's* years "confirm[ed] the great value she found in European culture," a value seen in the plots of so many of her later fictional works.

[48] Woodress, 136-37.

[49] Sergeant, 43-45, 49-50.

> She read and answered the letters of admirers who had begun to bore him. When great authors, who had been dined and feted the month before, were suddenly left to cool their heels in the reception room . . . it was Ardessa who went out and made soothing and plausible explanations as to why the editor could not see them. She was the brake that checked the too-eager neophyte, the emollient that eased the severing of relationships, the gentle extinguisher of the lights that failed . . . .[50]

Despite her high status on the masthead, Cather no doubt felt like a secretary at times, making excuses for a boss who was often not around. McClure increasingly spent his time in Europe or "taking cures" at spas such as that of Dr. John Harvey Kellogg in Battle Creek, Michigan.[51] When he *was* in New York, he made promises to writers and agents that he had no intention of fulfilling. He would assign articles to people he knew couldn't write, or offer staff positions to inexperienced but interesting people he met, notes E. K. Brown, and "by the time manuscript or appointee arrived, McClure would be far away where he could not be reached . . . . Someone else was required to deal with the outcome of McClure's reckless decision."[52]

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[50] Cather, "Ardessa," *Century*, May 1918, 105-06, rpt. in *Uncle Valentine and Other Stories*, 102-04. The Schickel film quotes the sentence describing O'Mally's enthusiasm ("He went in for everything . . . .") as an actual description of McClure by Cather.

[51] Lyon, 343-45. The Battle Creek "cures" are also mention in letters McClure wrote to Cather during June of 1909. These letters are at the Lilly Library, Indiana University.

Cather was often that someone. Phyllis Robinson notes that

> it was often a trial to explain some of McClure's bizarre behavior. Manuscripts had a way of disappearing or languishing for months in McClure's desk and Willa had often to suggest to writers and their agents that they be sure to send stories to her personally. Sometimes she almost wheedled disaffected authors to stop by and see her so that they could patch up misunderstandings.[53]

At the same time she was mediating disputes between outside contributors and her boss, Cather was still editing, and doing a great deal of rewriting. Some scholars speculate that Cather was "rewriting" to the point of creating nearly original nonfiction pieces of her own--as she had with the Eddy biography--but not putting her name on the work. She was frustrated by the low caliber of manuscripts she reviewed, a process of "looking through dross for gold."[54] Yet the acquisitions process was also instructive. Looking back on the experience, she later admitted,

> It was during the six years when I was editor (*sic*) of *McClure's* magazine that I came to have a definite idea about writing. In reading manuscripts submitted to me, I found that 95 percent of them were

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[52] Brown, 131.

[53] Slote, Introduction, *Uncle Valentine and Other Stories*, xiii; Robinson, 155. Evidence of Robinson's remark is found, for instance, in November 1909 correspondence on *McClure's* letterhead between Cather and a writer named Osborn Lowell, who had written a great deal for the magazine but had been offended by some unnamed slight by McClure. This correspondence is in the Cather Manuscripts Collection at Columbia University, New York, N. Y.

[54] Sergeant, 60.

> written for the sake of the writer--never for the sake of the material. The writer wanted to express his clever ideas, his wit, his observations. Almost never did I find a manuscript that was written because a writer loved his subject so much he had to write about it.[55]

Cather's experience as an editor taught her two other important lessons, one about the realities of the publishing world and the other about the nature of celebrity. She came to understand that publishing was a business that functioned according to the laws of supply and demand. "If the editor has twenty-five children's stories in the safe and a twenty-sixth good children's story comes in with one poor adventure story, he must buy the poor adventure story and return the good children's story," she once said.[56] Such a realization helped her to put her own past rejections into perspective--and to create a type of fiction that editors did not already have.

In her work at *McClure's* she was also exposed to a type of article that was one of the staples of all magazines after the turn of the century: the "human interest article" with its "passion for the inside story of the celebrated." Thus, wrote John Chapin Mosher in a 1926 article in *The Writer* magazine, Cather "saw the machinery by which the great are revealed to the world, and by what strategies many of them contrive to keep before the public eye"--and she vowed that "never, if she should become a public figure, would she have anything of it." The latter insight is a significant one in evaluating Cather's clear aversion to publicity after she did indeed become famous.[57]

Cather was by no means miserable halfway into her tenure at *McClure's*. But she was becoming restless. She had been thirty-three when she came to the magazine, and as she advanced through her thirties, it was dawning on her, she told her housemate and companion Edith Lewis, that "she was using her best years editing a magazine instead of developing as a writer."[58]

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[55] Eva Mahoney, "How Willa Cather Found Herself," *The Omaha World-Herald*, November 27, 1921, rpt. in Bohlke, ed., *Willa Cather in Person*, 37.

[56] Ethel M. Hockett, "The Vision of a Successful Fiction Writer," *Lincoln Daily Star*, October 24, 1915, rpt. in Bohlke, ed., *Willa Cather in Person*, 15.

[57] John Chapin Mosher, "Willa Cather," *The Writer*, November 1926, rpt. in Bohkle, ed., *Willa Cather in Person*, 92.

Between her arrival at *McClure's* and the middle of 1909, Cather had published six short stories.[59] Yet she felt pulled between the requirements of her job--in which, as Susan Rosowski paraphrases one of Cather's letters to Sarah Orne Jewett, "she felt as if she were performing on a trapeze, having to catch the right bar at the right moment or fall into the net"[60]--and her wish to spend more time on her own writing. Meanwhile, notes Rosowski, S. S. McClure wasn't helping, "encouraging her to forget her own writing, saying he felt she would never do much with that and advising her to concentrate on executive work."[61]

Cather, however, had begun to re-examine her journalism career after receiving a letter from Sarah Orne Jewett in 1908, in which the older writer had given her some strong advice:

> I cannot help saying what I think about your writing and its being hindered by such incessant, important, responsible work as you have in your hands now. I do think that it is impossible for you to work so hard and yet have your gifts mature as they should--when one's first working power has spent itself, nothing ever brings it back just the same . . . . Your vivid, exciting companionship in the office must not be your audience . . . you must find your own quiet

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[58] Edith Lewis, *Willa Cather Living: A Personal Record* (New York: Knopf, 1953), 69.

[59] Most of them in *McClure's*, but one in *Century* and one in *Harper's*.

[60] Cather's will prohibits direct quotation from her private correspondence.

[61] Susan Rosowski, *The Voyage Perilous: Willa Cather's Romanticism* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986), 39. McClure had unsuccessfully taken the same approach with Lincoln Steffens, his managing editor less than a decade earlier, telling him that *he* should forego a writing career because he was "the only great editor of them all, his first mate" (Steffens, 364).

> centre (*sic*) of life and write from that to the world . . . .[62]

In the office, McClure was beginning to take his star editor's dissatisfaction more seriously. In a letter he wrote to her in 1911, while she was on vacation, he advised her to "dismiss the magazine from your mind entirely; forget it exists; and when you come back I hope you will not let yourself be tied up in office machinery, but will work out a series of articles that will give us distinction."[63] By that time, however, S. S. McClure's power over his staff was waning. What's more, the magazine was not doing as well as it had been: though circulation had continued to increase, advertising sales had peaked in 1906, and by 1909 they had dropped by 20 percent.[64]

By 1912 Cather was not much concerned with either the magazine's finances or its articles. In the words of the narrator of the film *Willa Cather's America*, Cather, a year away from forty, was at "that time in life when we're all touched by our first intimations of mortality," prompting her to think back to her earlier hopes in order to remember what it was she had wanted to do with her life. She had to decide whether to "renew [her] youthful commitment to the best in [herself] or sink back into the consolation of habit, the comfort of routine" that her staff job offered.[65]

The novel she had written that year also revealed much of what was going on in Cather's mind. The main character of *Alexander's Bridge*, Bartley Alexander, is a man who is becoming aware that he has arrived at middle age--and that he is, though seemingly successful in a visible career (in his case, building spectacular bridges), profoundly unhappy. Talking to an old friend, he explains his dissatisfaction: "You work like the devil and think you're getting on, and suddenly you discover that you've only been getting yourself tied up. A million details drink you dry . . . ."[66]

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[62] This letter, quoted in Lewis, 66-67, was originally printed in *Letters of Sarah Orne Jewett*, Annie Fields, ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1911).

[63] S. S. McClure to Willa Cather, d. October 14, 1911 (Lilly Library, Indiana University).

[64] The circulation information is from Brown, 150; the advertising sales information is from Harold Wilson, "Circulation and Survival: *McClure's* Magazine and the Strange Death of Muckraking Journalism," *Western Illinois Regional Studies* 11.1 (1988), 79. Wilson blames the advertising drop partly on the country's poor economy during 1907 and 1908 but also on the fact that McClure continued to publish investigative pieces that offended advertisers at a time when other muckraking publications were backing off.

[65] Schickel.

Ironically, the novel that proved to be Cather's ticket out of the magazine world was made possible largely by that world. *Alexander's Bridge* was not only serialized in *McClure's* but favorably reviewed in it as well, and was bought for book publication by Ferris Greenslet of Houghton Mifflin, whom Cather knew through her acquisitions work. Greenslet would also buy her next three novels, *O Pioneers!* in 1913, *The Song of the Lark* in 1915, and *My Antonia* in 1918.

Cather's actual departure from *McClure's* was anticlimactic, since she was traveling for the magazine for much of 1912. When she decided simply not to come back from one of those trips, she met no resistance from S. S. McClure.[67] By the end of that year he, too, was out of a job. Sick of his impetuousness and long absences from the office and concerned about the magazine's financial state, his business partners had put McClure's son-in-law in charge, not actually firing S. S. but leaving him, as his biographer Peter Lyon puts it, "a general without an army." The magazine did, however, promise to publish a serialization of McClure's autobiography, if he could find someone to help him write it. Cather knew that S. S. was depressed by his fall from power and correctly suspected that he was in financial trouble as well. She agreed to write the autobiography and refused to take any money for the work.[68]

In early 1913, while she was finishing *O Pioneers!*, Cather began work on the project. He would talk and she would listen, taking no notes; then she would go home and write, "supplying the connective tissue and perspective that were beyond McClure's powers" but remaining true to "the special McClure words and ideas," explains E. K. Brown.[69] This collaborative process, like her other work for McClure, would have reverberations in her fiction. Cather later wrote to her Nebraska newspaper friend Will Owen Jones that her experience as McClure's ghostwriter helped her write from the point of view of a male character, Jim Burden, in her 1919 novel *My Antonia.*[70]

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[66] Cather, *Alexander's Bridge*, 12-13. Rosowski (39) and Woodress (200) compare Cather's feelings about her *McClure's* job in 1912 with *Alexander's Bridge*; Woodress believes that the book was partly her way of declaring that she was finished with journalism, a decision so difficult for her, he says, that she later rarely talked about this novel.

[67] Cather would write five more articles for magazine, all as a freelancer, during the early 1910s. One of them, called "Three American Singers" (December 1913), profiled three opera singers including Olive Fremstad, who became the model for her character Thea Kronborg in her 1915 novel, *The Song of the Lark*.

[68] Lyon, 324-33.

My Autobiography, by S. S. McClure--subtitled "The Story of a Boy Who Made Good: The inspiring struggle of an immigrant boy who became the greatest editor of his time"--appeared in installments beginning in the October 1913 issue of *McClure's* and concluding in its May 1914 issue. Not only was Cather's authorship not formally acknowledged, but she had kept herself--her work as his second-in-command--out of McClure's official life story.[71] Her service to S. S. McClure had come to an end, yet the two remained friends until Cather's death in 1947 (McClure died two years later). In a 1921 letter, McClure, looking back over his years in publishing, wrote, "The best magazine executive I know is Miss Cather."[72]

Conclusion

While one can count the number of preserved, signed newspaper articles Cather wrote and the issues of the magazines she edited, we may never know the full extent of her journalistic output: because of her extensive use of pseudonyms, her rewriting habits as an editor, and the fact that she often left articles unsigned, there is no sure way of identifying all of her periodical nonfiction. It is clear, however, that her work between 1893 and 1912 opened new worlds to her and supplied her with knowledge, and a perspective, that shaped her stories and novels.

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[69] Brown, 182.

[70] Cather to Will Owen Jones, d. May 20, 1919, Columbia University. This collaboration was also surely the model for the situation around which the plot of Cather's 1919 short story "Her Boss" (*Smart Set*, October 1919, 95-108, rpt. in *Uncle Valentine and Other Stories*, 119-39) revolves: a New York businessman at the end of his career begins to reminisce about his childhood in the west and decides to dictate his autobiography to his secretary.

[71] In 1914, the work was published in book form by Fredercik A. Stokes. In its dedication, McClure did thank Cather, noting that she was responsible "for the very existence of this book."

[72] Lyon, 390. The letter was written from McClure to his wife, Hattie.

Cather's many jobs in journalism also gave her a sense of herself as a businesswoman (particularly at *McClure's*) and provided her with important professional contacts in the literary world. Furthermore, the variety of her work--her role as "a chameleon journalist"[73]--taught her how to write about many different subjects, in different voices. By the time she published *O Pioneers!*, the novel that would win her national acclaim, she was a skilled master of characters and was, as Peter Benson notes, thoroughly acquainted with "the popular taste."[74]

Cather's friend and mentor Sarah Orne Jewett, the very person who finally persuaded her to give up journalism, had understood the value of Cather's first career. Jewett had explained to Cather that "one must know the world *so well* [italics hers] before one can know the parish."[75] After two decades in journalism, Willa Cather knew the world. She was ready to return to the parish--to the subject matter of her childhood, which would make her famous.

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[73] Faulkner, *The World and the Parish*, xiii.

[74] Benson, 246.

[75] This well-known Jewett quote--on which the title of *The World and the Parish*, the two-volume collection of Cather's nonfiction, 1893 to 1902, is based--is reprinted in Doris Grumbach's foreword to the 1988 Houghton Mifflin edition of Cather's *The Song of the Lark* (xv).

From 1850 To 1950

Actions Of Early Journalists

Often Unethical, Even Illegal

By Fred Fedler

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From 1850 To 1950

Actions Of Early Journalists

Often Unethical, Even Illegal

By Fred Fedler

Early reporters and editors have been portrayed as drifters and drunkards, rude and ruthless, prying and dishonest. Critics accused them of doing anything to get a story: of lying, cheating, and stealing.

Were the ethical standards in journalism ever as low as the stereotype suggests? To answer that question, this article examines newspapers' ethical standards over a 100-year period, from 1850 to 1950, when newspapers were the dominant means of mass communication and reporters at their pinnacle of influence.[1]

Researchers interested in today's journalists can easily study their characteristics and work. It is more difficult to study the journalists active during earlier periods in history. Those journalists have written thousands of books about themselves and their work, but many are flawed. Most have been written by the field's more successful (not typical) practitioners, especially those who worked for famous dailies in big cities. The memoirs emphasize the authors' successes, often minimizing or ignoring their failures. They reconstruct scenes, even entire conversations, and may exaggerate some details to make them more interesting. They also repeat newsroom lore, with details so sketchy that they are impossible to verify.

Still, the memoirs provide details that only journalism's "insiders" -- its participants and witnesses -- would know. Books written by historians and other objective outsiders may be more accurate, but fail to uncover and discuss every relevant detail.

Despite their individual flaws, all the books combined present a consistent picture of journalists, their work, and ethics during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.*

The Acceptance Of Gifts

For years, gifts were common, and journalists eagerly accepted them. Journalists considered the gifts small tokens of appreciation for their work. Many insisted that they earned the gifts and, because of their low salaries, needed them. Journalists also said they accepted the gifts because newspaper editors and owners set a bad example.[2] Few journalists expressed any regret or shame. Rather, journalists accepted the gifts as a routine, even necessary, perk of their job, rarely admitting that they or colleagues were corrupted by them.

The most common gifts included tickets to theater and sporting events, books, railroad passes, Christmas presents, and invitations to dinners and parties. Another common gift, liquor, contributed to journalists' reputation as heavy drinkers. Journalists consumed large quantities of liquor, in part because it was easily available.[3]

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*While discussing journalism during the period from 1850 to 1950, this article occasionally uses the noun "newspaperman," the pronoun "he," and other terms that, in today's society, are considered sexist. Journalists used those terms in their memoirs, and the author of this paper has not rewritten direct quotations. The terms reflect the era, including men's dominance in newsrooms.

A typical young reporter, William Andrew Spalding, found any event at a theater in Santa Monica, Calif., a grand occasion. Spalding would walk up to the doorkeeper, flash a ticket marked "Complimentary," or simply hand the doorkeeper his card. The head usher then escorted Spalding to a seat up front, or to a table especially prepared for the press.[4] Another reporter found that he could go to almost any night club in New York "and eat and drink for hours and never even have to tip the waiter."[5]

Fred W. Allsopp, a reporter in Little Rock, Ark., said reporters became so accustomed to such favors that they began to expect them, finding it painful to spend their own money on such items even when they could afford to.[6]

Even a major news service exploited the system. H. Allen Smith began to work for United Press during the 1920s and, with a wife and two children to support, asked for a raise. Smith hoped for $5 more a week, but UP experienced frequent "downholds" (efforts to reduce its expenses). Because of one of the downholds, Smith could not be given a raise. However, the editor of UP's book review column had just resigned, and Smith could be given the column. Publishers would send him free books, he was told, and he could average $15 a week by selling those he did not want to review. Smith adds:

> The books piled into my home, and every two weeks a young man came around and carried away all volumes I didn't want to keep, paying me 50 cents each whether they were $10 books or 25-cent pamphlets. The young man had similar arrangements with other book reviewers, including some of the top literary critics

of the town.[7]

Some reporters were corrupted by the system, engaging in practices that, even then, must have seemed questionable to at least some of their colleagues:

> Bob Fredericks, an amusement editor and critic in Miami, exploited the system, demanding a good table at nightclubs and ordering expensive steaks. After a show, Fredericks walked out without paying or leaving a tip. Nightclub operators never complained, fearing that Fredericks would criticize their show. Waiters spit on his steaks.[8]
>
> George Britt profited from free transportation. Each time a bad accident occurred on the Brooklyn Rapid Transit Lines, the company's press agent would be ready with a statement absolving it of any blame. The press agent asked reporters to print the statement in full, then gave each of them a book of tickets good for 100 free rides. Britt admits that the reporters continued to charge their newspapers a nickel a ride, and eventually pocketed $5.[9]
>
> On July 1, 1921, boxer Jack Dempsey fought Georges Carpentier, a French war hero. Dempsey's promoter never bought any advertisements but spent $65,000 a year entertaining boxing writers and gave them free tickets to the match. The promoter reportedly bribed some writers, paying them from $500 to $1,000 apiece. Even those who refused the bribes wrote column after column that helped publicize the fight, creating boxing's first million-dollar gate.[10]

There was only one near-universal taboo. Most journalists agreed that they should not accept money, especially not large sums, from people they wrote about. Money was considered a bribe, and journalists criticized colleagues who accepted it.

As early as 1858, Horace Greeley's *New York Tribune* exposed seven reporters paid $200 each for their services to the city. The *Tribune* called the payments "bribery." A letter in the *Tribune* also accused a reporter of accepting: (1) a golden-headed cane from a politician, (2) a gold watch from a lawyer, and (3) a weekly salary and free passes from a theater.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

There was, the letter continued, "a regular and well-organized system of blackmail." Unscrupulous reporters collected payments from officials in return for ignoring some stories about them.[11]

Other journalists, including Florabel Muir, indignantly rejected money. During the 1940s, Muir and other reporters in Los Angeles knew Mickey Cohen, a gambler and bookmaker whose name often appeared in the news. Cohen liked reporters and tried to help them "without expecting or getting much in return." Because he admired something Muir had written, Cohen tried to give her $1,500 for Christmas. Muir "bawled the hell out of him...."[12]

"Look," Cohen told her, "I wasn't trying to bribe you or anything. What's wrong with buying somebody a Christmas present?" Muir explained that it would be dishonorable for her to accept an expensive present from someone she wrote about.

The Use Of Deception

To obtain important stories, many reporters deceived their sources. Some simply hid the fact that they were reporters. Others posed as various officials, especially government officials with a legitimate right to information.

Reporter Frank Butler, a big man with a deep voice and impressive manners, was working for a New York tabloid when a millionaire became ill and was confined to his mansion on Fifth Avenue. Doctors and relatives refused to provide any information, and reporters were unable to bribe the man's servants to reveal more about his condition.

Butler obtained a silk hat from a pawnbroker and a medical bag from a police surgeon, then approached the mansion, posing as a doctor. While being led to the patient, Butler learned that he was not expected to live another 24 hours. Butler immediately left with the story.[13]

Reporter Morton Sontheimer insisted that reporters had to be dishonest to get some stories. "Anyone who can't be a convincing deceiver, who can't lie with a sincere face, is going to have a heck of a time as a reporter," Sontheimer said. He learned the value of deceit while working in the pressroom at Philadelphia's old City Hall. To obtain information no one would give a reporter, Sontheimer would flash a badge and say, "I'm from 619 City Hall."[14]

A reporter in New York posed as a fireman. Julian Ralph wanted to write about the city's theaters. Ralph believed that most were fire-traps: poorly built; lacking enough exits; and carelessly managed, with a dangerous clutter of flammable materials. He especially wanted to inspect the theaters' stages and dressing rooms but was turned away from every theater.

Ralph obtained a uniform from the Fire Department and an appointment as an extra watchman, with authority to work in all the city's theaters. Dressed as a fireman, Ralph then visited a different theater every night. No one tried to stop him, and actors told him "the most astounding facts about the shabby and dangerous quarters allotted to performers behind the scenes."[15] Ralph's stories embarrassed the theaters' managers, but also puzzled them, since he never revealed how he obtained the information.

Chicago was one of the nation's most competitive markets, along with Denver and New York, and the city's reporters engaged in practices that were both unethical and illegal, then expressed pride in their accomplishments -- a pride that reflected the era. Journalists were preoccupied with the task of obtaining stories and seemed to believe that their results justified their use of any means. Some added that their actions were not unusual: that dishonesty was common in every field.

Frank Carson was managing editor of William Randolph Hearst's *Herald-*

Examiner. So his reporters could go anywhere in Chicago, Carson kept a draw filled with badges for the police, sheriff, coroner, health department, and federal agents.[16] Another of Carson's drawers contained official-looking court forms: writs, warrants, summonses, and subpoenas. If Carson wanted a diary, for example, he might prepare a search warrant, then sign it with the name of the proper official. A reporter would bring the diary back to the *Herald-Examiner* for copying, then quietly return it -- and destroy the warrant.[17]

It was easier for reporters to disguise their identities while contacting people by telephone. Like good actors, reporters could pretend to be almost anyone. Harry Romanoff, Chicago's "greatest telephone reporter," was famous for his impersonations. Here are three examples:

*When a police officer was killed, newspapers wanted his picture. Romanoff called the officer's widow, identified himself as a police captain, and encouraged her to cooperate, explaining that his newspaper was "the policeman's best friend."[18]

*When Romanoff learned of a shooting on Chicago's South Side, he called a hospital for information about the victims, saying he was the police commissioner.

*When Romanoff learned of a shooting that involved state troopers in Rock Island, Ill., he called a police station, saying he was the state director of public safety and calling for the governor.

Eavesdropping And Kidnapping

Other reporters eavesdropped and kidnapped. In his memoirs, Morton Sontheimer admits that, whenever he had to interview someone in a hotel, he went directly to the room without first announcing himself over a phone, then listened at the door before knocking.[19] "Keeping your ears tuned to everything that's said, particularly the things not addressed to you, will bring you a lot of leads on stories," Sontheimer said.

Florabel Muir, the first woman employed by the Salt Lake *Herald*, resorted to both eavesdropping and burglary. Muir overheard two deputies working unusually late, then saw one put some notes in her desk. Using a hairpin, Muir picked the lock. Reporters, she said, were so anxious to uncover exclusive stories that they had no scruples about such things.[20]

The deputy's notes revealed that a girl had fallen in love with an Army captain and given birth to a boy. A doctor who cared for the girl and other unfortunate young women earned a profit by selling their babies to the highest bidders. Posing as husband and wife, the deputies had gone to the hospital that afternoon to buy the girl's baby for $100. They paid by check, and Muir's story appeared before the doctor had time to cash it. Because the doctor tore up the check and denied that he sold the baby, he was never convicted.

Reporters for Hearst's newspapers in Chicago and New York used an even more drastic tactic, occasionally kidnapping a source. Reporters at Chicago's *Herald and Examiner*, for example, helped police capture several murderers, but rarely brought suspects directly to the police. Instead, reporters brought suspects to the newspaper for wining, dining, and questioning. Many confessed at the *Herald and Examiner*, giving the newspaper exclusives that sent its circulation soaring.[21]

Posing as police officers, Hearst's reporters in New York "arrested" people suspected of committing sensational crimes, then questioned them at the *Journal*. Reporters also promised to bring unhappy young women to their missing lovers. They brought them to the *Journal* instead, then tried to learn every lurid detail of their romance.[22]

Stealing Pictures

By the 1920s and '30s, pictures were as important as stories.

Journalists everywhere stole them. Newspapers had used pictures before the turn of the century, but it was technologically difficult to print them. As technology improved during the early decades of the 20th century, there was an explosion of pictures, particularly halftone portraits. Reporters sought pictures of people in the news, especially pictures of criminals and the victims of crimes and accidents.

Reporters seemed insensitive to the pain they caused, rarely expressing concern for the people whose pictures they stole, or for the people who saw a friend's or relative's picture in print. Again, reporters were preoccupied with their job: with the task of getting the pictures (and proud of their ingenuity and success).

Labert St. Clair found that his editors in Chicago "would excuse any breach of faith or morals to get a photograph, particularly when scandal was involved." St. Clair adds that he never had to do anything unethical: that his own method of obtaining pictures was simple and entirely legal:

> Until I felt that I had won the complete confidence of the person who had the desired picture, I never mentioned it. Once I felt that I had established friendly relations, I would bid the victim goodby, take my hat, open the door, and start to leave. Suddenly, apparently as an afterthought, I would ask for a picture, and, nine times out of ten, get it. To have argued or pleaded for it would have meant failure.[23]

Sontheimer, too, obtained most pictures by simply arguing, coaxing, pleading, or threatening. Weeping and lying were also effective. "When refused a picture," Sontheimer explains, "I would sob, explaining that if I didn't get it, I was going to lose my job, and what would my poor mother do without my salary?" Sontheimer adds:

> Picture-grabbing calls for more ingenuity and less conscience than any other phase of the business. This is because the subject whose picture is sought is usually dead or

> missing -- otherwise a photographer could, at worst, lie in ambush and snap the picture....[24]

Other journalists lied, stole, and impersonated the police.

When a jealous husband shot his wife, then attempted to kill himself with a gun and a razor, Florabel Muir climbed through a back window and slithered through pools of blood, stealing every picture she could find.[25]

The thefts involved some dangers, but rarely any risk of arrest. Jane Franklin was sent to Coney Island a few weeks after starting at the New York *Mirror*. A gangster had been killed, and a dancer and her boy friend arrested. Franklin visited the woman's mother, noticed a picture of a handsome youth on a table and slipped it under her coat. Her editor was delighted, then discovered that it was a picture of another man.

Three years later a couple was killed on their wedding day by the bride's former boyfriend. Franklin went to the bride's home, climbed up a back stairs, and was rummaging through a room when she heard a noise. The woman's father was coming toward her with a knife.

"I get you, you thief," he yelled. "I kill you!"

Franklin escaped, shaking all over, but continued pursuing other stories and photos. As a result, an old woman tried to push her down a flight of stairs.[26]

While working for the *Examiner* in Chicago, reporter Edward Doherty and a colleague impersonated the police. Doherty explains, without shame:

> We got into a house by pretending to be cops. We flashed our reporters' stars and strode right in without being asked. Then, while I questioned some mother about her daughter, or some wife about her husband -- never making notes -- Frank would ... walk around examining everything. When we left, I had the story under my hat, and Frank had the pictures under his coat.[27]

A reporter in Brooklyn was involved in an even more brazen effort.

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Posing as a police inspector, he went to the home of a wealthy woman who had been robbed: ordered to sit up in bed and point to her jewelry box. The reporter was accompanied by a photographer and asked the woman to re-enact the holdup. The police needed photographs, he said, to study the intruder's techniques and determine whether he was responsible for other crimes. The woman cooperated, and was horrified when her photograph appeared on a tabloid's front page. The photograph showed her in bed, wearing only her nightgown: her mouth open and her hands raised above her head.[28]

Other 20th Century Problems

Two other problems also arose during the early 20th century. First, poorly paid reporters began to accept second jobs, often as press agents. Then, when they returned to their primary jobs at newspapers, some favored their outside clients.

Second, reporters everywhere were approached by ambulance chasers: attorneys looking for clients. The ambulance chasers and their runners loitered around police stations, then sped to the scene of accidents, offering to represent their victims on a contingency basis. The ambulance chasers also paid reporters for tips.

Martin Quigley was approached during the 1930s while writing for the Kansas City *Times*. An attorney offered Quigley $15 a week and 10 percent of any damage claims he won. Quigley recalls:

> All I had to do was to go to a pay phone twice a night and call in to him the names and addresses of the night's accident victims. Nothing crooked, the information would be in the paper in a few hours anyway, give him a head start on checking them for possible cases.[29]

Quigley declined, saying that the information he obtained at work belonged to his newspaper.

Theodore Prager found that ambulance chasers had everyone on their payrolls in New York: police officers, ambulance drivers, hospital employees, even doctors. Moreover, everyone prospered. It was easy work, Prager said, with good pay and little chance of getting caught.[30]

James H. Richardson was approached by an attorney in Los Angeles. "Now, of course," Richardson admitted, "that isn't ethical for either a lawyer or a newspaperman ... but my friend was hungry, and hunger does things to people, even if they are lawyers and newspapermen."[31] Richardson was desperately in love, and desperately in need of money to get married. He referred one case to his friend and was handed $500, the one and only time he split a fee.

Sontheimer was cheated by the ambulance chaser he helped. Sontheimer was working 11 hours a day for $18 a week, and was promised $50 for each accident case he found and another $50 if the attorney won. "I thought I'd get him a couple of cases, enough to get me out of the hole, and then quit," Sontheimer said. He found six cases, but was not paid until he confronted the attorney, then was given only $35.[32]

Newspaper Editors And Publishers

Newspaper editors and publishers were responsible for some of journalism's most serious and pervasive problems. Editors and publishers set their newspapers' policies, and some demanded that reporters do anything necessary to obtain a story. Some even coached their reporters on unethical practices, such as posing as government officials. Others never told their reporters how to get a story, but chastised those who failed. Editors and publishers also set a bad example, themselves engaging in questionable practices.

For years, editors lied about their circulations. Editors wanted

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their newspapers to appear to be the largest and most influential in their city. With larger circulations, editors were also able to charge their advertisers higher rates. Advertisers complained that they were overcharged and had no way of knowing how many people they actually reached. The abuses continued, however, until the establishment of the Audit Bureau of Circulations in 1914.

Editors' and publishers' other questionable practices included:

> *Political biases. Some editors slanted stories about political candidates and issues. Others became involved in politics, then used their newspapers to promote their political careers.
>
> *Other biases. Editors expected their staffs to slant stories about other topics they favored or opposed.
>
> *Advertising policies. For 100 years, editors published advertisements for products and services that were disreputable, often useless, and even harmful. To attract and retain more revenue, editors and publishers also protected some advertisers -- and blackmailed others.

POLITICAL BIASES. Especially during the 1800s, editors and publishers frequently entered politics, then reported on issues in which they were involved. Few saw anything wrong with the practice. Many of this country's first newspapers were subsidized by political parties, and the tradition continued into the late 1800s.

"Long John" Wentworth, an early editor in Chicago, returned to the city after serving in Congress and, in 1857, was elected the city's 16th mayor.[33] Similarly, Patrick Walsh, editor of the Augusta *Chronicle and Constitutionalist*, was elected to the Augusta City Council, then to three terms in the Georgia House of Representatives. In 1894, Walsh was appointed to the U.S. Senate and was later elected mayor, a post he held until his death.[34]

In return for a newspaper's support, other politicians might appoint its editor (or an editor's friends or relatives) to a political post. Typically, the St. Louis *Democrat* supported Abraham Lincoln and, after becoming president, Lincoln appointed its editor postmaster of St. Louis. Other newspapers received lucrative government printing contracts.

Some journalists insist that the system was better than today's. Two newspapers were published in Indianapolis, for example: the *Journal*, which supported the Republican Party, and the *Sentinel*, which supported the Democratic Party. Neither newspaper pretended to be impartial, and Claude Bowers believed that, although "colored," their stories deceived no one. With one paper representing each party, Bowers said, the public heard a genuine debate, so important in a democracy.[35]

Some colleagues disagreed. While working as managing editor of a paper in Cincinnati, John Cockerill found that its owner's political ties made it more difficult for him to expose the city's corruption.[36]

OTHER BIASES. Newspapers also promoted other policies that their editors and publishers favored -- and discredited or ignored those they opposed. The policies seemed to be a common and accepted part of newspaper jobs. Reporters said they followed the policies out of a sense of loyalty to their editors and newspapers, but also because of fear. Reporters feared that their careers would suffer if they refused an assignment.

Few reporters wrote outright lies, however. Rather, the process of slanting a story was usually more subtle: a matter of emphasis and placement, as in these examples:

> *While working for the Chicago *Tribune*, reporter William Salisbury was ordered to write about Lincoln Park. The *Tribune* disliked the politicians who ran the park, and Salisbury was told to emphasize the terrible conditions there: to show "that

these politicians were letting a great public park go to ruin." Salisbury went to 40 nearby homes and obtained eight useable (unfavorable) interviews. The story Salisbury wrote described a frightful state of affairs. Bums scared little children and slept in the park all night. Honest citizens feared for their lives, lest hordes of the bums attack them.[37]

*James Gordon Bennett Jr. took over the New York *Herald* in 1872, and a list of his friends was posted in the newsroom. The friends' names had to be spelled correctly and mentioned as frequently as possible. If, on the other hand, someone offended Bennett, he might order his staff to never again mention the person's name in the *Herald*.[38]

*In 1902, William Randolph Hearst's *Journal-American* in New York City announced that it would sponsor a fireworks display to celebrate his election to Congress. The fireworks exploded prematurely, killing 17 people. Other newspapers published the story on Page 1. The *Journal-American* buried it on Page 5, never mentioning the fact that the accident occurred at a rally for Hearst.[39]

ADVERTISING POLICIES. During the last half of the 19th century, newspapers gradually gained their independence from political parties, but became more dependent upon the revenue provided by advertisers. Then, some of newspapers' most blatant inaccuracies and lies appeared in their advertisements.

Some newspapers accepted advertisements for prostitutes, abortionists, loan sharks, and fortune tellers. Most accepted advertisements for patent medicines. Manufacturers might add a little flavoring and coloring to a mixture of water and alcohol (or narcotics), then claim that their concoction cured a dozen ailments: coughs, colds, measles, gout, diarrhea, cancer, warts, tuberculosis, rheumatism, smallpox, epilepsy, and venereal diseases.[40]

Newspapers in small towns were especially dependent upon advertisements for patent medicines. Agencies representing their manufacturers subsidized rural newspapers, giving them free newsprint, ink, and other supplies in return for printing the advertisements.

Most of the advertisements disappeared during the early 1900s. Muckrakers exposed the medicines' contents, and new laws stopped or restricted their promotion and sale.

Some publishers rejected the advertisements even before they were required to do so. In 1903, the Scripps-McRae League appointed a veteran editor as advertising censor, with the power to reject any advertisements he considered unfit. According to some estimates, the editor rejected nearly half a million dollars' worth of advertising in a single year.[41] Similarly, Victor Lawson refused to publish the Chicago *Daily News* on Sundays, or to accept advertisements for burlesque shows, massage parlors, firearms, tobacco, or patent medicines containing alcohol.[42]

Less reputable editors and publishers catered to their advertisers, emphasizing favorable stories about them and suppressing the unfavorable. The favorable stories included frequent "puffs" and profiles of local businesses and business owners. Most puffs were only a paragraph or two long and printed in news columns. Two examples from the Boston *Transcript* include:

> OUR BOOTS -- We have been much pleased in seeing "what a shine" our boots cut since we have used Holden's Blacking. Besides the leather is preserved, and feels so much softer....It is an excellent article, which we recommend to our friends. It may be found at 102 Court Street.
>
> It is said that Whiting, 28 Winter Street, has some of the finest Port Wine in the city. If, in these temperance days, there are any who go so far as to taste a glass of this temperance wine, they will find the genuine article at the store above named.[43]

The system worked in reverse, too. If a local business refused to advertise in a newspaper, the newspaper might ignore it, or publish only critical, even concocted, stories about it.[44]

An early victim, Edward P. Fry, was attacked by the New York *Herald*. Fry refurbished his theater in New York and brought in better performers. Fry refused, however, to advertise in the *Herald*, to give its staff free passes, or to have his theater's printing done in the *Herald's* shop. Publisher James Gordon Bennett retaliated with "the most blatant sort of character assassination." Bennett charged, among other things, that the theater and its environs were crawling with prostitutes. Fry sued and, in 1853, was awarded $10,000 in damages and $7,000 in court costs, a substantial amount in those days.[45]

Fifty years later, William Spalding witnessed a similar phenomenon in Santa Monica, Calif. A company wanted to promote Santa Monica as a seaside resort and began by building a hotel near the beach. The company never advertised in the Santa Monica *Herald*, which therefore sided with citizens "who considered the enterprise hair-brained and reckless."[46]

Some advertisements were obvious bribes, yet some newspapers accepted them, especially in California. By the 1890s, a railroad was extraordinarily powerful, and Fremont Older of the San Francisco *Bulletin* found that:

> The entire state at that time was politically controlled by the Southern Pacific. In order thoroughly to dominate the state it not only controlled the Legislature, the courts, the municipal governments ... in fact, all state and county and city officials, but it also had as complete a control of the newspapers of the state as was possible, and through them it controlled public opinion.

Each month the *Bulletin* received a check for $125, "a good-will offering from the railroad."[47] The *Bulletin* also accepted money from a gas company and other corporations. Older, the paper's managing editor, wanted to stop the payments, but the *Bulletin's* owner said the newspaper was too weak to survive without them.

Day after day, editorials in the San Francisco *Examiner* owned by William Randolph Hearst attacked the railroad, revealing that it bribed members of the Legislature, cheated on its taxes, and abused the public. Suddenly, the editorials stopped. Years later, another newspaper revealed that the *Examiner* stopped its campaign in return for $30,000 in advertisements.[48]

A Hearst paper in Chicago blackmailed city officials. Author George Murray explains that city and county advertising contracts, including legal notices, were especially lucrative. To get the contracts, Hearst's Chicago *American* published a never-ending series of stories that exposed minor abuses, such as government employees who loafed or slept on the job. Murray adds:

> Such stories had a double value. They kept up the illusion among newspaper readers that they had a knowledgeable watchdog, with their interests at heart, keeping an eye on public servants. They also kept the politicians aware that for every such story printed, just nibbling at the edges of corruption, the editor had two others which were real dynamite.

The dynamite stories -- gathered but never printed -- described companies owned by politicians. Businesses that wanted favors from Chicago's politicians bought supplies from their companies.[49]

Other Shameful Incidents

Journalists were also involved in four other incidents that reflect the era's low standards:

> *During the Civil War, Joseph Howard Jr., city editor of the *Brooklyn Eagle*, aided by a reporter from another paper, forged a presidential proclamation. The proclamation ordered the draft

of another 400,000 men and called for a day of fasting and prayer due to recent military disasters. The proclamation's wording suggested that the North was not winning the war. Howard hoped that the dismal news would upset the stock market and increase the price of gold he had bought on margin.

*After the Civil War, William Tweed, better known as "Boss Tweed," robbed New York City of an estimated $75 million to $200 million. The Tweed Ring succeeded, in part, because it ran the city and bribed newspapers with lucrative government advertising contracts. Tweed helped a total of 89 newspapers, and 27 were so dependent upon the bribes that they failed when the bribes stopped.[50]

*Frederick Bonfils and Harry Tammen acquired the Denver *Post* in 1895. The *Post* was a sensational paper, filled with giant headlines, red ink, stunts, and crusades. People criticized by the newspaper accused Tammen and Bonfils of blackmail and sued for libel, but were never able to prove their charges in court.[51] In 1924, Bonfils was called before a Senate committee investigating the Teapot Dome scandal. Rather than expose the scandal, Bonfils and the *Post* had apparently blackmailed an oilman involved in it.

*On June 9, 1930, a gunman shot Alfred "Jake" Lingle, a police reporter for the Chicago *Tribune*. Someone fired a single shot into the back of Lingle's head, gangland style. Lingle had been paid $65 a week but enjoyed a lavish lifestyle and, at the time of his death, was carrying $1,400 in cash. Lingle had explained that he inherited $50,000 from his father. It was the first time that gangsters killed a Chicago journalist and, at first, Lingle was treated as a martyr. Then other journalists learned that Lingle had inherited only $500. As a police reporter, he had met both gangsters and top police officials. Lingle apparently worked as a middleman, helping arrange favors between them, and may have double-crossed someone. Or Lingle may have blackmailed gangsters, claiming that he could protect their gambling operations from the police (and encouraging raids on establishments that refused to pay him.)[52]

Ethical Leaders: A Contrasting View

There were exceptions to the norm. Some reporters rejected assignments they considered unethical, risking their jobs on matters of principle.

As a beginner at the New York *World* during the 1880s, Louis Golding was paid by the column. The *World* was quarreling with the city's mayor, and an editor told Golding to interview the mayor about the newspaper's attacks. "Tell him you represent any other paper you please, but get him to talk about the *World*," the editor said. Shocked, Golding responded that he did not care for the assignment. He returned to his seat, knowing he would never again be asked to write a story for the newspaper.[53]

Imogene Stanley of the New York *Daily News* rejected two assignments. The Prince of Wales visited Quebec in the autumn of 1923 and approached Stanley at a dance, apparently thinking that she was a New York debutante. Stanley's editor demanded a story about her romantic evening, one that described what she thought while dancing with the prince, what he said, and her reaction to it all.

The prince was not supposed to be quoted directly, and Stanley refused to violate the rule. Instead, she wrote a story that described the evening in a detached way, without ever mentioning herself. Later, Stanley disobeyed another order, refusing to tell a 10-year-old girl that her mother had been convicted of murder.[54]

Publishers such as Horace Greeley and Joseph Pulitzer also set high standards for themselves on some matters, and conveyed those standards to their staffs.

Greeley published the New York *Tribune* from 1841 to 1872, and author James R. Osgood insists that Greeley never printed a word which "he did not believe to be absolutely true."[55] Pulitzer purchased the New York *World* in 1883 and refused to protect even his largest advertisers. If an advertiser asked for a favor, perhaps that a relative's name be deleted from an embarrassing story, Pulitzer published the name with an extra prominence. Another journalist adds, "Any *World* man who suppressed news to please an advertiser was likely to be fired."[56]

O.K. Bovard, the managing editor of Pulitzer's *Post-Dispatch* in St. Louis, also avoided conflicts that might embarrass the newspaper or hinder its ability to report the truth. When asked, for example, to kill a story about an accident in a department store, Bovard ordered his staff to place a larger headline above the story "and thus it appeared in the remaining editions of the day."[57]

Similarly, after buying the *Miami Herald* in 1937, John Knight refused any favors that might obligate him or his paper. Knight declined a free box at a race track. After eating in a fancy night club, Knight was told that the house had picked up his bill. Knight asked to see the manager and said that, if he was not allowed to pay for his meals, he could never return.

Smalltown publishers exhibited a similar integrity. In 1940, Niver W. Beaman became editor of the *Greenwich* (Conn.) *Time*. A retired millionaire, Albert W. Johnston, owned the paper and believed that it had a duty "to dig for the truth and report it fully and fairly, letting the chips fall where they may."[58] Beaman published every drunken driving case on the newspaper's front page. Several prominent citizens were arrested and asked Johnston to kill their stories. Johnston never did, nor even suggested that Beaman print anything "other than the whole truth on any matter."

A Broader Context: Societal Values

It is difficult and probably unfair to examine journalists' ethics in isolation. Journalists interacted with, and were influenced by, other Americans. Some encouraged high standards, but many did not. Thus, to a considerable extent, journalists reflect the era, resisting some pressures but succumbing to others. In many cases, journalists' standards were obviously higher than those of people they dealt with. Other Americans tried, for example, to bribe reporters and to muzzle their newspapers.

While working for the New York *Herald*, Cornelius Vanderbilt Jr. found its office "besieged with all kinds of agents seeking space for the photographs and news items of their respective clients." Some bribed reporters, and Vanderbilt adds:

> Much of the material inserted in social columns and many of the photographs in the society sections of American newspapers today do not represent those who are really active in the various lines, but rather those whose publicity agents are active for them.[59]

Julian Ralph was especially proud of his work covering New York's corrupt legislature. Ralph estimated that he and other reporters saved taxpayers millions of dollars by exposing attempts to loot the public treasury. Ralph was offered $1,000 "and a steady rain of heavy bribes if I would mend my ways."[60] Like many other reporters, Ralph rejected the bribe.

Several reporters retaliated against the people who offered them bribes:

> *Louis T. Golding began writing for New York's *Commercial Advertiser* during the winter of 1887, covering a court that handled minor crimes. A pompous man, "decorated with a wonderful black eye," charged an Irishman with assault and offered his eye as evidence. As Golding was leaving, the man urged him not to print anything, "backing the request with two dollars." Golding responded by offering to blacken the man's other eye. "It was the first and last time that I encountered bribery," he said, "and I was pretty hot." Still fuming, Golding devoted an entire column to the story.[61]

> *In 1927, a woman died during an abortion in a doctor's office. The doctor fled, and reporter Theodore Prager and a detective waited in his office. An attorney appeared and asked if he could talk to Prager privately. In a hallway, he said the doctor was a fine man and would be ruined by the story. Prager felt the attorney's hand slip into his jacket pocket. Finding five $5 bills there, he flung them in the attorney's face, then called his office with the story.[62]

*Webb Miller was offered two bribes, both in Paris after World War I. A man representing a syndicate of American corset manufacturers offered Miller $50 a week to help bring corsets back in fashion. American women had stopped wearing corsets, ruining some manufacturers. They thought that if stories from Paris reported that corsets were coming back in style, American women would follow like sheep. The manufacturers hired a publicity man to visit correspondents in European capitals, asking them to fabricate stories about corsets. Miller refused but learned that the man found other correspondents in Paris and Berlin willing to promote corsets.

The second episode involved a young man who struck and injured someone with his car. The man came from a prominent family, but Miller decided against using the story because the accident seemed minor. The young man learned only that Miller had the story and, a few hours later, offered him a bribe to ignore it. Miller retrieved the story from his wastebasket and cabled it to the United States, then sent the young man a telegram telling him what happened.[63]

Other people unhappy with a newspaper's stories bought and muzzled it. Thomas M. Storke witnessed two examples.

The *Herald* in Santa Monica attacked the region's water supply, charging that it flowed through an open ditch and was stored in an open reservoir. Both were covered with algae, a breeding place for germs, mosquitoes, and other animal life. The *Herald* warned that the water might cause an epidemic. The Los Angeles Water Co. sued the *Herald* for $10,000 and hired someone to quietly begin buying enough stock to give it control of the paper. After succeeding, the water company dropped its libel suit, and the newspaper stopped its attacks.[64]

Storke later acquired a paper of his own and attacked Santa Barbara's utility companies, charging that they had been taken over by out-of-town corporations that were demanding higher rates for gas, telephone, and electrical service. In the midst of his campaign, Storke received a letter from a stranger in Michigan, saying he wanted to buy the paper. Storke was not anxious to sell and, to get rid of the man, demanded $40,000 (20 times the amount he paid for it). Still, the stranger appeared in Storke's office, ready to close the deal. Shortly thereafter, the City Council approved higher gas rates. Too late, Storke learned that the stranger was employed by the utility companies.

Summary and Discussion

No one can verify every detail in journalists' memoirs. Some details may be exaggerated, some mistaken, some deliberate lies. But overall, the memoirs present a consistent picture of journalists' ethics during the period from 1850 to 1950.

Reporters seemed willing to use any tactic necessary to obtain a story. They eavesdropped, lied, stole, and kidnapped. In the process, they invaded other people's privacy and destroyed their reputations "with a sometimes ruthless disregard of the consequences."[65]

Newspaper owners lied about their circulations. Many also became involved in politics, then used their newspapers to promote their political views and careers. Others accepted advertisements for medicines that were worthless, even dangerous, and also protected other important accounts. Editors and publishers embarrassed and even blackmailed businesses that refused to advertise in their columns.

There were limits, however. Reporters accepted gifts, but rarely large sums from people they wrote about. And, although guilty of slanting stories, reporters rarely lied. Rather, they slanted stories through a more subtle process of emphasis and placement.

Some journalists admitted that they acted unethically. Others did not, but seemed defensive: to know, at least, that other people accused them of unethical acts. Perhaps for that reason, journalists tried to justify their actions, insisting that: (1) they followed orders, (2) the good they accomplished justified their actions, (3) they would have behaved differently if they had been paid a highger salary, and (4) they would also have behaved differently if their editors and publishers had set a better example.

Three other factors contributed to the era's low standards. First, few journalists saw anything wrong with some practices now considered unethical: their acceptance of gifts, for example. Second, journalists seemed invulnerable: accountable to no one but their editors. Journalists were rarely arrested, not even when guilty of theft, burglary, and kidnapping. Third, not everyone wanted journalists to act ethically. Many other Americans preferred a corrupt the press, trying to threaten and bribe reporters and to muzzle their newspapers.

Generalizations are misleading, however. Standards varied from individual to individual, and from newspaper to newspaper. Some editors preferred to lose good stories, and some reporters lost their jobs rather than act unethically. Generally, however, the era's standards were considerably lower than today's, justifying the stereotype of journalists as drifters and drunkards, rude and ruthless, prying and dishonest.

Outrageous Examples

Some tales about journalists' lack of ethics during the period from 1850 to 1950 are truly horrifying, as in these examples.

1. Author Robert St. John describes a man who murdered several women. Police arrested the man and worked on him with rubber hoses almost all one night, yet he refused to confess. About dawn, a Pittsburgh reporter picked up one of the hoses and continued the torture, convincing the man that he should talk. Later that morning, the suspect led police to a subterranean chamber he had constructed for torturing his victims.[66]

2. During World War I, correspondents often gathered in London's Savoy Bar. Will Irwin recalls "an aggressive, burly, and boastful brute of a news-photographer fresh from the revolution in Mexico." The photographer described the capture of two men who were sentenced to be shot at sunrise. The photographer was scheduled to sail from Vera Cruz the next morning and had to leave within an hour to reach his boat. He wanted a photograph of the execution and bragged that, to get it, he persuaded a Mexican colonel "to shoot the prisoners at once."[67]

3. An official from a water company offered one of William Randolph Hearst's editors a bribe. The editor threw the man out of his office. When Hearst heard about the incident, he reportedly told the editor: "You're a fool! Why didn't you take the money and keep up the fight just the same? He would never have dared to say a word about it."[68]

4. Hearst's International News Service had a difficult time reporting stories from Europe during World War I. Hearst wanted the United States to stay out of the war. England and France retaliated against Hearst by cutting off his correspondents' access to their countries' underseas cables. As a result, the INS was unable to compete with other news services: to quickly transmit important stories to clients in the United States.

INS developed a unique solution to the problem: a battery of imaginary writers. *Harper's Weekly* exposed the fraud on Oct. 9, 1915, reporting that it tried but failed to find and interview Hearst's correspondents in Europe. *Harper's* said INS had hired writers in the United States, bought them subscriptions to foreign newspapers and magazines, then ordered them to rewrite the stories in those publications. INS added the bylines of its imaginary correspondents and distributed the rewritten stories as genuine, freshly cabled from Europe.[69]

(Continued on next page)

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Outrageous Examples (Continued)

5. One of Chicago's largest department stores refused to advertise in Hearst's newspapers. Hearst's staff in Chicago found a young girl in the early stages of smallpox and helped her get a job as a clerk at the store. As the girl's first day of work was ending, a doctor sent by the paper found and examined her, concluded that she had smallpox, and said that she would have to leave at once.

Minutes later, an editor called, asking the store's managers about the incident. His paper had already prepared a story, he said. It appeared beneath a five-column headline and included a picture of the girl. A separate editorial warned that other employees might also have smallpox, and urged city officials to close the store until the problem was thoroughly investigated. The editorial and story were never published. Within hours, the store's managers signed a big advertising contract with the newspaper.[70]

6. To supplement their incomes, some journalists accepted second jobs, often as press agents. An editor at the Atlanta *Journal* negotiated an exceptional deal. He promised to protect a downtown hotel from bad publicity in return for a free room, meals, and a small salary. The hotel's manager, embarrassed by recent stories, accepted the offer.

The editor's friends joined him in the hotel restaurant, eating better than ever before. The arrangement continued until someone committed a murder on the hotel's fifth floor. It was a sensational story, covered by every paper in Atlanta. The hotel's manager called in his new press agent and asked why he had failed to keep the story and the hotel's name out of the city's newspapers. The editor had always known that his guarantee of "no bad publicity" would be good only so long as nothing bad happened at the hotel. Thus, he bowed out as gracefully as he could, admitting that he failed.[71]

7. Frederick Bonfils, co-owner of the Denver *Post*, was sued for libel, and his attorneys managed to obtain a list of the jury panel: everyone's name and address. H. Allen Smith recalls that he and other reporters were told to visit potential jurors and to learn everything possible about their political beliefs, religion, income, histories, and -- most important of all -- opinions of the Denver *Post* and its publisher. Smith adds: "This sort of investigation was not too difficult, and Mr. Bonfils thought it was altogether honest because, when we called on these people, we always told them that we worked for the Denver *Post*. We told them we were in the circulation department, interested in getting new subscribers and finding out how old subscribers liked the way the paper was going."[72]

Endnotes

1. The author gathered the information for this article over a period of years, reading and scanning hundreds of books and some articles as part of a larger and continuing study of journalists' characteristics and work during the period from 1850 to 1950.

2. Morton Sontheimer. Newspaperman: A Book about the Business. New York: Whittlesey House, 1941, p. 95.

3. Fred Fedler. "Assessing The Historical Stereotype Of Journalists As Heavy Drinkers." A paper presented to the History Division at the Southeast Colloquium of the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication in Gainesville, Fla., March 1995. SEE ALSO: King News by M. Koenigsberg. Philadelphia: F. A. Stokes Co., 1941, p. 37.

4. William Spalding. William Andrew Spalding: Los Angeles Newspaperman. San Marino, Calif.: The Huntington Library, 1961, pp. 23-24.

5. H. Allen Smith. to Hell in a Handbasket. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., Inc., 1962, p. 238.

6. Fred W. Allsopp. Little Adventures In Newspaperdom. Little Rock, Ark.: Arkansas Writer Publishing Co., 1922, p. 34.

7. Smith. to Hell in a Handbasket, p. 229.

8. Nixon Smiley. Knights of the Fourth Estate: The Story of the Miami Herald. Miami: E. A. Seemann Publishing, Inc., 1974, pp. 163-164.

9. Edward Carey Cohen. "Myrtle Ave. To Thaw Trial, Via The Roller Skating Rink" in Shoeleather And Printer's Ink, George Britt, ed. New York: Quadrangle/The New York Times Book Co., 1974, p. 113.

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11. Bernard A. Weisberger. Reporters for the Union. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1953, pp. 42-43.

12. Florabel Muir. Headline Happy. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1950, p. 218.

13. Allen Churchill. Park Row. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, Publishers, 1958, p. 227.

14. Sontheimer. Newspaperman, p. 76.

15. Julian Ralph. The Making Of A Journalist. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1903, pp. 141-142.

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16. A. A. Dornfeld. Behind The Front Page: The Story of the City News Bureau of Chicago. Chicago: Academy Chicago Publishers, 1983, p. 83.

17. George Murray. The Madhouse On Madison Street. Chicago: Follett Publishing Co., 1965, p. 210.

18. Dornfeld. Behind The Front Page, p. 119.

19. Sontheimer. Newspaperman, p. 94.

20. Muir. Headline Happy, p. 10.

21. Murray. The Madhouse On Madison Street, p. 205.

22. Churchill. Park Row, p. 88.

23. Labert St. Clair. I've Met The Folks You Read About. New York: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1940, pp. 51-52.

24. Sontheimer. Newspaperman, p. 78.

25. Muir. Headline Happy, p. 5.

26. Ishbel Ross. Ladies Of The Press. Reprint edition. New York: Arno Press, 1974, pp. 299-301. Originally printed in 1936 by Harper & Row, Publishers.

27. Edward Doherty. Gall and Honey: The Story Of A Newspaperman. New York: Sheed & Ward, 1941, pp. 42-43.

28. Frank Mallen. Sauce for the Gander. White Plains, N.Y.: Baldwin Books, 1954, p. 230. Other journalists used similar tactics to steal diaries and mail. SEE: Gall and Honey by Doherty, pp. 42-43.

29. Martin Quigley. Mr. Blood's Last Night: End Of An Era In Journalism. St. Louis, Sunrise Publishing Co., 1980, pp. 159-160.

30. Theodore Prager in collaboration with Donald D. McLennan. Police Reporter. New York: Duell, Sloan And Pearce, 1957, p. 116.

31. James H. Richardson. For the Life of Me: Memoirs Of A City Editor. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1954, p. 64.

32. Sontheimer. Newspaperman, p. 65. Another attorney visited a pressroom at Brooklyn Police Headquarters, promising to buy the reporters there a new suit for referring profitable criminal cases to him. See: "Myrtle Ave. To Thaw Trial, Via The Roller Skating Rink" by Carey, p. 114.

33. Don Fehrenbacher. Chicago Giant: a Biography of "Long John" Wentworth. Madison, Wis.: The American History Research Center, 1957, p. 142.

34. Earl L. Bell and Kenneth C. Crabbe. The Augusta Chronicle: Indomitable Voice of Dixie. University of Georgia Press: Athens, 1960, pp. 83-85.

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48. Murray. The Madhouse On Madison Street, p. 62.

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51. Edwin Emery. The Press and America: An Interpretative History of the Mass Media, 3rd ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1972, p. 436.

52. John Boettiger. Jake Lingle or Chicago on the Spot. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., 1931, pp. 26-27. SEE ALSO: Behind The Front Page by Dornfeld, p. 140. SEE ALSO: The Madhouse On Madison Street by Murray, pp. 360-361.

53. Louis Thorn Golding. Memories Of Old Park Row: 1887-1897. Printed For Private Circulation, 1946, p. 13.

54. Ross. Ladies Of The Press, pp. 81-82 and 288-289.

55. Charles T. Congdon. Reminiscences of A Journalist. Boston: James R. Osgood And Co., 1880, p. 221.

56. Homer W. King. Pulitzer's Prize Editor: A Biography of John A. Cockerill 1845-1896. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1965, p. 213.

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58. Niver W. Beaman. Fat Man in a Phone Booth: Notes off a Newspaperman's Cuff. Chicago: Cloud Inc., 1947, p. 112.

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61. Golding. Memories Of Old Park Row: 1887-1897, pp. 7-8.

62. Prager. Police Reporter, pp. 91-92.

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64. Spalding. William Andrew Spalding: Los Angeles Newspaperman, pp. 31-32.

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72. Smith. to Hell in a Handbasket, p. 199.

ABSTRACT

From 1850 To 1950

Actions Of Early Journalists Often Unethical, Even Illegal

Were the ethical standards in journalism ever as low as stereotypes suggest?

This study of newspapers during the period from 1850 to 1950 found that most reporters seemed willing to do almost anything to get a story, even lie, cheat and steal. They invaded other people's privacy and destroyed their reputations with a sometimes ruthless disregard of the consequences.

Newspaper owners lied about their circulations. Many became involved in politics, then used their newspapers to promote their political views and careers. Editors and publishers accepted advertisements for fakes medicines and protected other important advertisers.

There were limits, however. Reporters rarely lied or accepted bribes, and remained loyal to their newspapers.

Still, generalizations are misleading. Standards varied from individual to individual and newspaper to newspaper, with some adopting extraordinarily high standards. Generally, however, the era's standards were considerably lower than today's, perhaps justifying the stereotype of journalists as drifters and drunkards, rude and ruthless, prying and dishonest.

A paper presented at the annual convention of the American Journalism Historians Association in London, Ontario, Oct. 3-5, 1996.

THE MEDIUM IN THE MIRROR:
HOW JOURNALISTS IN THE 1880s AND 1890s VIEWED "NEW JOURNALISM"

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THE MEDIUM IN THE MIRROR: HOW JOURNALISTS IN THE 1880s AND 1890s VIEWED "NEW JOURNALISM"

ABSTRACT

Journalists in the age of New Journalism were fiercely proud of their field, ascribing it with earth-shattering power. Thanks to their predecessors in the middle of the 19th Century, their occupation was now independent of parties and political rings. To them, journalism was a perpetual-motion machine that kept society in order, and their current version was utilizing human-interest stories to accomplish the task more creatively than ever before. Although most journalists saw their occupation as a profession, few advocated initiating formal training. Meanwhile, journalists disagreed on how sensational newspapers should be; not surprisingly, the fault line lay between sensationalism's practitioners and its critics. As John Cockerill wrote, journalism was "the greatest marvel of the intellectual and material powers of man at the period of their highest development." Humanity was on the move, and so was journalism.

THE MEDIUM IN THE MIRROR: HOW JOURNALISTS IN THE 1880s AND 1890s VIEWED "NEW JOURNALISM"

While Julian Ralph was working on a story in Virginia for the New York *Sun*, a prominent citizen approached him. Turning on the Southern hospitality, the man greeted Ralph warmly but offered a caveat:

> Colonel Ralph, I feel it my duty, sir, to say to you plainly, sir, that if you should come down heah, sir, to repo't in the manner in which you are accustomed to repo't in the No'th, sir—inquiring into our relations with the women, sir, and such like things—we would feel obliged, sir, to blow the top of your head off.

Ralph complied on this mission, staying away from such invasive reporting.[1] But a larger issue than his personal safety had been raised: the perception of the profession of journalism. A few years after Joseph Pulitzer took over the New York *World* in 1883, publishers all across the country were adopting, adapting and appropriating his successful formula. Frank Luther Mott analyzed his product as a blend of aggressive reporting, sensationalism, crusades and stunts, vigorous editorial page, size, illustration and promotion.[2] Citizens all over the country, including the gentleman from Virginia, reacted to this journalism in a variety of ways. But how did journalists in the 1880s and 1890s view this "New Journalism"? Few works have dealt with this question head-on. Hazel Dicken-Garcia approached journalistic conduct, remedies and standards but only through 1889, devoting only a few sentences to Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst.[3] Marion Tuttle Marzolf explored critical articles in the press dealing with journalism's content, professionalism and ideals, but did not consider individual journalists' autobiographies or archives.[4] Good analyzed journalists' autobiographies but primarily as products of literary imagination.[5] The atmosphere surrounding New York sensationalism was studied by John D. Stevens.[6] A more specific question would be, how did journalists view New Journalism's ideals, power, training and status? Journalists in this era were fiercely proud of their profession, ascribing it with earth-shattering power which kept the Republic unified and pleased that human-interest stories were helping distinguish journalism. Although most journalists saw their occupation as a profession, few advocated initiating formal training. Meanwhile, journalists disagreed on how sensational newspapers should be; not surprisingly, the fault line lay between sensationalism's practitioners and its critics.

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[1] Julian Ralph, "How a Repo'ter Should Repo't," The Journalist, 12 December, 1891, 15.
[2] Frank Luther Mott, American Journalism: A History of Newspapers in the United States Through 250 Years, 1690 to 1940 (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1941), 436-443.
[3] Hazel Dicken-Garcia, Journalistic Standards in Nineteenth-Century America (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 62, 185, 231.

Ideals of New Journalism

What is journalism?

On an occasion in which apparently affronted by the press, Prince Otto von Bismarck — a contemporary of the New Journalists — said disdainfully that journalism was nothing more than ink on paper.[7] How did editors and reporters of the Gilded Age, men and women who ushered in what they described as a "New Journalism," characterize their field? Descriptions ranged from the elaborate to the practical. Prominent Cincinnati editor Murat Halstead, for example, told the Kentucky State Press Association that the printed page was "one of the elements of the atmosphere of the age. The balm and spices, political and personal, that give the familiar flavor, enter peculiarly into the airs that lap this Continent."[8] Edward B. Phelps, meanwhile, attempted a more practical definition of a newspaper. While several dozen men are engaged in creating the daily paper, he explained, thousands of people have contributed orally. For example, a reporter learns of an attempted murder and rushes to the scene. He might interview 20 sources—police, witnesses, perhaps even the victim and the attacker—though only a few might be quoted. The ensuing article, along with the other copy from the first page to the last, Phelps said, is "the stereotyped reflex of a thousand conversations."[9] Similarly, James Gordon Bennett Jr. wrote in the New York *Herald* that journalism is "the reflection of events which are created almost hour by hour of thoughts and opinions that change and take shape in the mould of these events."[10] Charles A. Dana once marveled that for a penny or two a reader could purchase "a history of the entire globe of the day before!"[11] Many journalists captured the meaning of their profession using operational, if serpentine, definitions. For example, Dana, in an editorial in the New York *Sun*, wrote that journalism is

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[4] Marion Tuttle Marzolf, Civilizing Voices: American Press Criticism, 1880-1950 (New York: Longman, 1991), 7-33.

[5] Howard Good, The Journalist as Autobiographer (Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1993).

[6] John D. Stevens, Sensationalism and the New York Press (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 55-100.

[7] Cited in George W. Smalley, "Notes on Journalism," Harper's New Monthly Review, July 1898, 214.

> [t]o know how to gratify the universal appetite for authentic news; to entertain and interest the public while giving instruction; . . . to cherish tastes broad enough to cover the whole range of society, and to

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[8] Murat Halstead to Kentucky State Press Association, 20 May 1874, Charles F. Wingate, ed. Views and Interviews on Journalism (New York: F. B. Patterson, 1875), 113.

[9] Edward B. Phelps, "The Philosophy of Successful Reporting," The Journalist, 14 December 1889, 27.

[10] Charles F. Wingate, ed. Views and Interviews on Journalism (New York: F. B. Patterson, 1875), 289.

[11] Charles Dana, "Journalism: A Lecture Delivered to the Students of Union College," McClure's, May 1895, 563.

> appreciate what is conservative as well as what is radical; what is eccentric as well as what is regular; to be powerful without being tedious, and earnest without being extravagant; to speak a language which all can understand, and yet to impart to every discussion a light from the highest truths; . . . to impress none but correct and elevated moral principles upon the popular mind; to fight against vice so as to do good and not mischief; to resist all forms of public robbery, and to exercise a wholesome terror over open villains and sneaking hypocrites; to deal equal justice to all parties and all men; to encourage the good that is in the world as orderly and pertinaciously as he represses the evil; to have eye, mind and sympathy open to every honest manifestation of human activity.[12]

As New York *World* editor Frank I. Cobb described in his obituary of Joseph Pulitzer, his boss was the first editor to regard the newspaper as public property instead of private property.[13] On his 60th birthday, Pulitzer cabled from Rome to the *World* staff his thoughts of a great newspaper, words which would eventually become the newspaper's creed. Such an institution, he said,

> should always fight for progress and reform; never tolerate injustice or corruption; always fight demagogues of all parties; never belong to any party; always oppose privileged classes and public plunder; never lack sympathy for the poor; always remain devoted to the public welfare; never be satisfied with merely printing news; always be drastically independent; never be afraid to attack wrong, whether by predatory plutocracy or predatory poverty.[14]

What is news?

As the New Journalists concentrated their efforts on more vigorous reporting to boost circulation and as newsgathering techniques became more advanced thanks to the telegraph and telephone, the question, What is news?

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[12] Charles F. Wingate, ed. Views and Interviews on Journalism (New York: F. B. Patterson, 1875), 52.

[13] Frank I. Cobb, "Mr. Pulitzer's Journalism," World, Oct. 31, 1911, cited in John L. Heaton, ed., Cobb of The World: A Leader in Liberalism (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1924), 240.

[14] Joseph Pulitzer to *World* staff, quoted in John L. Heaton, ed., Cobb of The World: A Leader in Liberalism, New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, 1924, 244.

became more and more salient. News, as Little Rock, Ark., journalist Albert Sidney Gregg wrote, is an entity that appears different to every person. An event or item can strike one reporter or reader as fascinating and another as matter-of fact.[15] But the sensationalism of the age jaundiced journalists' perceptions of the newsworthy.

At the top of many journalists' lists were the interesting and unique. To Joseph Pulitzer, news was the life of a paper, an ever-changing kaleidoscope presenting readers surprises every day.[16] He delighted in emphasizing the unusual: news should be what is "original, distinctive, dramatic, romantic, thrilling, unique, curious, quaint, humorous, odd, apt to be talked about."[17] Human interest should be dominant, he urged, in one letter condemning the *World*'s coverage of public events that failed to point out who was attending or participating.[18] All of the above elements, he said, should be encased in "terseness, humor, descriptive power, satire, originality, good literary style, clever condensation, and accuracy, accuracy, accuracy!"[19] Sensational journalist Morrill Goddard, right-hand man for Pulitzer and later William Randolph Hearst, was known for his emphasis on sex, crime and science. He explained that just as a composer can create an endless variety of eight notes in two octaves for the human voice, a journalist can toy with 16 elements of human interest — love, hate, fear, vanity, evil-doing, morality, selfishness, immortality, superstition, curiosity, veneration, ambition, culture, heroism, science, amusement — to play upon the emotions of readers.[20] To justify his treatment of advances in medicine, he used the Bible. "Aside from the story of the Creation and the Crucifixion of the Saviour, what are the outstanding things in the Scriptures, which thrilled our imagination in childhood, and we have never forgotten?" he asked. "Surely they are the miracles."[21] Further, he said that just as Jesus' miracles were the "keynote" of His ministry, reporting of modern miracles ranks as the greatest public service that a newspaper could perform.[22] To Hearst, truth is not only stranger than fiction, it is also more fascinating.[23] Hearst prodded his staffs to pepper the publications with surprise excitement. In his later years he enjoyed recalling the eye-opening news items from his turn-of-the-century newspaper:

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[15] Albert Sidney Gregg, "Philosophy of Newsgathering," The Journalist, 1 February 1890, 3.
[16] Joseph Pulitzer, "The College of Journalism," North American Review, May 1904, 678.
[17] Joseph Pulitzer to Charles M. Lincoln, 30 July 1910, quoted in Don C. Seitz, Joseph Pulitzer: His Life and Letters (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1924), 416.
[18] Joseph Pulitzer to Charles M. Lincoln, 24 December, 1910, quoted in Ibid, 416.
[19] Joseph Pulitzer, quote in Alleyne Ireland, An Adventure with a Genius: Recollections of Joseph Pulitzer (New York: Dutton, 1914), 50.

> In ancient times [Arthur] McEwen once said of the *American* that when you picked it up and looked at the first page you said, "Gee whiz!"
>
> And when you looked at the second page you said, "Holy Moses!"
>
> And at the third page, "God Almighty!"[24]

Power of New Journalism

Extent of the power

E. L. Godkin believed that the importance of the press could not be underestimated. "A republic without a press is an impossibility, almost a contradiction in terms," he said. "The modern newspaper is the equivalent of the Greek *agora*, the only means possessed by the citizens of interchanging thought and concerting action."[25] To John A. Cockerill, the newspaper's highest duty was to serve the public. The newspaper, he said, is the only dependable way for servants in office to learn the will of the "sovereign people."[26] He described the nation as a machine, kept running by the electrical nervous system that is the press. The best way citizens and leaders keep in immediate touch, he said, is by letters to the editor.[27] Journalism correspondence teacher Edwin Shuman perhaps waxed most poetically about journalism's power. "There are giants in these days—giants greater than Hercules or Goliath of Gath," he said. "Strongest among the strong are two modern Titans — Confined Steam and Free Thought. Steam Power is mighty. Brain power alone is mightier. Yoke the two together and you move the world."[28]

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[20] Morrill Goddard, What Interests People and Why (New York: The American Weekly, 1935), 89-90, 119.
[21] Ibid, 32.
[22] Ibid, 52.
[23] William Randolph Hearst to American staff, cited in Coblentz, William Randolph Hearst..., 260.
[24] William Randolph Hearst to Edmond D. Coblentz, 1933, quoted in Ibid, 257.

Source of the power

But what served as the source of this power? While Pulitzer gloried in news, he used it to lure readers into his editorial page, the power base of the newspaper. A journalist, he said, has a unique position. "He alone has the privilege of moulding the opinion, touching the hearts and appealing to the reason of hundreds of thousands every day," he said. "Here is the most fascinating profession."[29]

E. L. Godkin was amused at other journalists' mystical views of journalism. News collection and arrangement was nothing mysterious to him. But editorials played an important role: the "turning on of the light." Editorials "point out what is important, and what is trifling; what the reader had better weigh and remember, and what he may pass over and reject," he said, "and anybody who treats them as a mere insignificant adjunct has little to say about editing that is worth listening to."[30] Journalists who focus on trivial news items at the expense of editorials is no better "than his predecessor who hawked them about the marketplace or who told them over a pot of beer in the tavern," Godkin wrote. The arrival of the "New Journalism," however, prompted journalist correspondence teacher Edwin L. Shuman to disagree 21 years later. He deemed the newspaper's power as a moulder of public opinion overrated. "The time has come when the American people, at least, are doing a vast deal of thinking for themselves," he wrote, citing in part the end of "servile party organs."[31] On the other hand, Shuman said that a newspaper's power to educate could never be overrated and was stronger than that of the forum, the church and public school.[32]

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[25] Wingate, Views..., 210.
[26] John A. Cockerill, "The Newspaper of the Future," Lippincott's Monthly Magazine, August 1892, 220.
[27] Ibid, 222.
[28] Edwin Llewellyn Shuman, Steps Into Journalism: Helps and Hints for Young Writers (Evanston, Ill.: Correspondence School of Journalism, 1894), 218.
[29] Joseph Pulitzer, "The College of Journalism," North American Review, May 1904, 650.

Several journalists said unmistakably that the most important item in newspapers is the news. One was John Cockerill.[33] The age of the editorial page was extinct, he wrote in 1892, after it had, over the previous two decades, shied away from presenting the views and demands of a powerful individual[34] and had therefore lost its grip on forcefulness, individuality, moral responsibility and even reason.[35] Instead, readers were doing the leading. "Had their predilections not already been in that direction, the editor would not have dared to point the path; his object is not the public good, but the public pleasure," he wrote.[36] Murat Halstead agreed that the primary duty of a journalist is to print the news.[37] As Whitelaw Reid put it, the newspaper is not called "newspaper" for nothing. The newspaper which thoroughly, accurately and efficiently digs out and presents the news better than its rivals, he said, will lead the field. "I know there is another idea urged by men who are anxious to become propagandists; but whenever such men have obtained exclusive control of a daily newspaper they have ruined it," he said. "The essence, the lifeblood of the daily paper of to-day, is the news."[38] The element of news was preeminent to William Randolph Hearst, too.[39] A newspaper "stands or falls by its NEWS INTEREST," he wrote his New York *American* staff. "Our business is properly described as the NEWSPAPER business. We must print all the news BUT we must see more in the news than other editors do."[40] Though he loved attention-grabbing features and sensations, he directed his staff not to let them be substituted for the news.[41]

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[30] E. L. Godkin, "The Mystery of the Newspaper," The Nation, 12 August 1875, 105.
[31] Shuman, Steps..., 8-9.
[32] Ibid, 9.
[33] John A. Cockerill, "Some Phases of Contemporary Journalism," Cosmopolitan, October 1892, 696.
[34] Ibid, 698.
[35] Ibid, 699.

Two Midwestern journalism giants viewed local newsgathering as a newspaper's keystone. *Kansas City Star* founder William Rockhill Nelson said that the integral member of the newspaper team was the reporter. "He is the big toad in the puddle," Nelson said, "the essential chap in the shop." According to him, the paper could manage without its editors, but it "should go to smash if we had no reporters. They are the fellows whose work determines whether the paper shall be dull or interesting, whether it shall attract readers or repel them."[42] William Allen White set the tone for his philosophy in his salutatory editorial, "Entirely Personal," in the Emporia *Gazette* June 3, 1895, saying he expected to conduct all of the typical duties of a "country editor" for the next generation. "It is likely that he will write the wedding notices of the boys and girls in the schools," he wrote, "that he will announce the birth of the children who will someday honor Emporia, and that he will say the final words over those of middle age who read these lines."[43] Further, he appealed to his readers that if they wanted "a fair, honest home paper that will stand for the best that is in the town, here it is."[44] To him politics was "so little," as it was to his readers, he thought. "Not one man in ten cares for politics more than two weeks in a year," he said, adding that politics would be served accurately but unobtrusively.[45] "People choose their paper not because of its politics but because of its integrity, its enterprise, and its intelligence," he wrote. Similarly, he placed little weight in the editorial page. He felt that accurate and vigorous reporting would boost the *Gazette*'s circulation and image more than would editorials, and that a newspaper with such reporting could take any editorial stance it wanted to without suffering. Hindsight proved him right. "We were chatty, colloquial, incisive, impertinent, ribald, and enterprising in our treatment of local events," he wrote in his autobiography. "Looking back over it now, I can see that much of it was based upon a smart-aleck attitude, but the people liked it. Circulation grew."[46]

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[36] Ibid, 698.
[37] Murat Halstead to Port Huron (Mich.) *Times*, 1 March 1870, cited in Wingate, Views..., 128.
[38] Whitelaw Reid to Charles F. Wingate, quoted in Wingate, Views..., 25.
[39] William Randolph Hearst to *American* staff, 1938, cited in Coblentz, Wiliam Randolph Hearst..., 259.
[40] William Randolph Hearst to Edmond D. Coblentz, 1933, Ibid, 257.
[41] William Randolph Hearst to *American* staff, 1938, Ibid, 259.

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[42] Ida H. Nelson and Laura Nelson Kirkwood, William Rockhill Nelson: The Story of a Man, a Newspaper and a City (Cambridge: The Riverside Press, 1915), 126-7.
[43] William Allen White, "Entirely Persona," Gazette, 13 June 1895, quoted in Sally Foreman Griffith, ed., The Autobiography of William Allen White, 2nd ed. (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1990), 131.
[44] Ibid, 132.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Ibid, 136.

Training for New Journalism

In harmony with the functions of journalism is the concept of how one learns how to apply those functions. Most all of the editors and reporters in the Gilded Age saw journalism as a profession, yet the training grounds for entry to the profession was a topic of fierce debate. The idea for journalism courses in higher education began in 1869 with General Robert E. Lee, who as president of Washington College offered 50 scholarships to budding journalists. The idea remained just that, though, as no journalism courses were initiated and no one claimed the scholarships.[47] The plan approached reality in 1903, when Joseph Pulitzer endowed a school of journalism at Columbia University with $2,000,000, and the school was finally opened in 1912.[48] Horace Greeley, the dean of American journalists in the middle of the 19th Century, often remarked that the real newspaper man "was the boy who slept on newspapers and ate ink."[49] Most of his successors in the Gilded Age agreed with him. Journalists seemed so proud of the progress of their profession, so proud that it had broken free from the bonds of political parties, that to most of them no school could improve it. After all, the profession had made it this far without formal instruction.

Arguments against journalism schools

The most powerful argument against the school of journalism was that it already existed. As Henry Watterson said, there was "but one school of journalism, and that is a well-conducted newspaper."[50] A journalist, he said, who worked his way up the ladder of his paper and familiarized himself with each department would empower himself to become a leader. "Special instructions in artillery does not make a man a soldier. Nor will special knowledge of one department, merely, make a man an editor," he said.[51] Or, as Julian Ralph put it, "It is not good to enter a ship by the cabin window. You cannot direct sailors unless you know the ropes yourself."[52] Meanwhile, New York *Evening Post* editor-in-chief Horace White argued that existing colleges were sufficient journalism schools, teaching skills that would hone neophytes' sharpness, composition and ability to judge evidence.[53] E. L. Godkin called the idea of a journalism school absurd, agreeing with White that expression, "the art of journalism," is or should be taught everywhere anyway.[54]

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[47] Mott, American Journalism..., 406.
[48] Ibid, 605.
[49] Horace Greeley to Charles Dana, cited in Charles A. Dana, "Journalism: A Lecture Delivered to the Students of Union College," McClure's, May 1895, 555.
[50] Henry Watterson to Charles F. Wingate, quoted in Wingate, Views..., 15.

Another line of argument dealt with what could *not* be taught. Godkin said that the business of a journalist is "to reason on all the facts of life, of every class, or at least, if he does not reason on them all himself, to know whether other persons can reason on them or not. There is no recipé that will enable a man to do this."[55] Horace White contended that colleges could teach the technique of medicine, architecture and engineering but not the technique of journalism unless it actually published a newspaper to compete with others in the same town. Three tasks he mentioned: shorthand (he said he never knew any editor-in-chief who wrote this way), typewriting (E. L. Godkin taught himself at home) and proof-reading (anyone could learn the technical part in a couple of hours). Then, in a jab at Pulitzer, he added: "Columbia would no more think of embracing these things in her curriculum than she would of establishing a chair of head-lines, a chair of interviews, or a chair of 'scoops.'"[56] Another teachable necessity, according to several journalists, is the "nose for news." "This, I presume, is inborn," said William Rockhill Nelson. "If a man hasn't it let him forsake the newspaper field. He will never make a success of it."[57] Horace White said that just as scents in various breeds of dogs can differ in keenness, so too can journalists' news scents, but that the nose for news could only be taught in the newspaper office.[58] Julian Ralph described an unrelated "sixth sense" that journalists must have, a mysterious instinct that inexplicably, suddenly and sometimes irrationally propels them to go to the right place or do the right thing to obtain news.[59] This sense is not teachable, said Ralph. "This is why schools and classes of journalism are superfluous and nearly worthless," he wrote.[60]

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[51] Ibid, 16-17.
[52] Julian Ralph, The Making of a Journalist (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1903), 7.
[53] Horace White, "The School of Journalism," North American Review, January 1904, 26-27.
[54] Wingate, Views..., 212.
[55] Ibid, 210-211.

In addition, some journalists agreed with Henry Watterson and his blanket statement that journalists simply cannot "be made to order."[61] Martha Louise Rayne, whose women's school was the first "school" of journalism in the country,[62] conceded that although perception and writing are perfected by experience, "they must also be natural gifts." If a young woman "is in earnest in her desire to enter journalism, she must be content to begin at the beginning."[63] Julian Ralph put it even more succinctly:

> The man who is or is not a born newspaper man either can write entertainingly and with some sense of color . . . or he cannot. If he can,

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[56] Ibid, 26.
[57] Sally Foreman Griffith, ed., The Autobiography of William Allen White, 127.
[58] White, North American Review, 26.
[59] Ralph, The Making ..., 64-65.
[60] Ibid, 72.
[61] Henry Watterson to Charles F. Wingate, quoted in Wingate, Views..., 15.
[62] See James Stanford Bradshaw, "Mrs. Rayne's School of Journalism," Journalism Quarterly 60 (1983), 513.
[63] M. L. Rayne, What Can a Woman Do: Or, Her Position in the Business and Literary World (New York: Arno Press, 1974; originally Petersburgh, N.Y.: Eagle Publishing Co, 1893), 36-37.

> that ability must be developed and fashioned, not according to any so-called 'tricks of the trade,' however, for the artist or preacher or doctor or writer who follows only the cut-and-dried rules of his calling is a mere bush that does not flower. If he does not develop his own methods and 'style,' he will never amount to much beyond getting his living.[64]

Charles Dana, while stopping short of calling journalism schools or departments useless, expressed concern that journalism schools would branch out to the extent that they would offer unrelated subjects. "I do not believe in scattering your fire before you are in the face of the enemy," he wrote.[65] He preferred a old-fashioned general education that stressed first and foremost English and then politics, the Constitution, the Bible and the classics, adding that he would much rather have a reporter covering a boxing match who was familiar with the Ajax of Sophocles, Tacitus and Horace than one who was not.[66] E. L. Godkin advised budding journalists to take courses in history, legislative science and political economy.[67] Meanwhile, sensational journalist Morrill Goddard recommended the educational route that he took: studying psychology to understand readers' minds and emotions.[68]

Arguments for journalism schools

Two proponents of a journalism school struggled with the "born, not made" aphorism as well. London *Times* American correspondent George Smalley called the phrase too extreme, acknowledging that some natural gifts are required to distinguish a journalist. He pointed out that no training or experience is useless to beginners or veterans. Further, he said that journalism, while perhaps not a profession like medicine and law, is still an occupation, and the fact that its purpose and functions are hazy, "the more reason for trying to ascertain its true relation to social and political life, and the right methods to be followed in its pursuit."[69] Journalism correspondence school teacher Edwin L. Shuman, meanwhile, deemed the notion true, "as far as the same sentiment is true when applied to preachers and lawyers, and no farther."[70] He noted that the budding musician has conservatories and teachers and that the budding artist has studios and masters but that the budding literature writer has no such resources. "He must stumble along alone and learn only by repeated trial and failure," he wrote. "It is almost as bad in newspaper work."[71]

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[64] Julian Ralph, "The Newspaper Correspondent," Scribner's Magazine, August 1893, 150.
[65] Dana, McClure's, 556.
[66] Ibid, 556-561.
[67] Wingate, Views..., 212.
[68] Goddard, What Interests... , 8-10.

But it was Pulitzer who positively and forcefully made the case for journalism schools. He had toyed with the idea of starting a journalism school for more than a decade, and in a much-cited article in *North American Review* the year after he made the agreement with Columbia University, he sought to answer all of the critics who had panned his idea over the years. He answered with guns blazing those who had said journalists are born. "Perhaps the critics can name some great editor, born full-winged like Mercury, the messenger of the gods? I know none," he dictated. "The only position that occurs to me which a man in our Republic can successfully fill by the simple fact of birth, is that of idiot." He then supplied Abraham Lincoln and William Shakespeare as examples who developed their craft over a period of years. "Shakespeare's best play, Hamlet, was not his first, but his nineteenth, written after growth and maturity, after hard work, the experience, the exercise of faculties and the accumulation of knowledge gained by writing eighteen plays," he said. "As Shakespeare was a 'born' genius, why did he not write Hamlet first?"[72]

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[69] George W. Smalley, "Notes on Journalism," Harper's New Monthly Magazine, July 1898, 215.
[70] Shuman, Steps into Journalism, 86-87.
[71] Ibid, 3.

As for the nose for news instinct, Pulitzer explained that like other great qualities, it needed "development by teaching, by training, by practical object lessons illustrating the good and the bad, the Right, the Wrong, the popular and the unpopular, the things that succeed and the things which do not."[73] In fact, inbred news instinct turned loose in a newsroom, Pulitzer said, would please the attorney more than the editor. One of journalism's main difficulties, he said, "is to keep the news instinct from running rampant over the restraints of accuracy and conscience."[74]

Pulitzer scoffed at the office-as-school argument. He described on-the-job training as incidental instead of intention; nobody in a newsroom, he said, has the time or patience to teach a rookie what he needs to know. Indeed, he added, "in my own experience as a newspaper reporter and editor I never had one single lesson from anybody."[75] He made the analogy with law and medicine: law students learn the trade by copying bills of cost for the country lawyer, while pre-med students sweep out the doctor's office. "Now it is recognized that better results are obtained by starting with a systematic equipment in a professional school," he said.[76]

Pulitzer noted that every issue of a newspaper represented a battle for excellence and suggested that studying the battles could be as useful to a journalism student as studying real battles is to the military student.[77] Specifically, he said that journalists needed to learn how to confront dilemmas — "either to yield to a popular passion that he feels to be wrong or to risk the consequences of popularity." Instruction would be helpful, he said: "Might not a hundred concrete examples of inflexible devotion to the right serve as a moral tonic to the student?" he asked.

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[72] Pulitzer, North American Review, 642-643.
[73] Ibid, 644-645.
[74] Ibid, 644.
[75] Ibid, 647.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid, 644.

Addressing Dana's educational philosophy, Pulitzer said that studying history, law, political science in the traditional curriculum would give students "only a fraction of the knowledge" they would need. He proposed an overhauled, specialized curriculum, explaining that, just as with doctors, journalists are specialized.[78] His curriculum proposal included style, law, ethics, literature, truth and accuracy, history, sociology, economics, enemies of the Republic (growth of corporate power, illiteracy in the South, etc.), arbitration, statistics, modern languages, physical science, the study of newspapers, power of ideas, principles of journalism and the news.[79]

Pulitzer said that his chief goal in planning the school was improving the welfare of the Republic, which rises or falls with newspapers. The school would improve journalists, which would improve newspapers, which would improve the public.[80] "An able, disinterested, public-spirited press, with trained intelligence to know the right and courage to do it, can preserve that public virtue without which popular government is a sham and a mockery," he said.[81] Another result for which he hoped was the instilling of pride in the profession, hoping that the journalist, like a West Point cadet, "knows that none of his comrades will lie or cheat or do anything unworthy of a gentleman."[82] Perhaps Pulitzer considered how some of his yellow journalism tactics had been "unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman."

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[78] Ibid, 649

[79] Ibid, 663-678.

[80] Ibid, 678-679.

[81] Ibid, 680.

[82] Ibid, 650.

Content of New Journalism

Historians have attempted to delineate the various strains of New Journalism. Mott, for example, said that while sensationalism was a distinct ingredient of New Journalism, "yellow journalism" added other characteristics: scare-heads, the lavish use of pictures, "faked" stories, the colorful Sunday supplement, and sympathy with the underdog.[83] At the time, though, Gilded Age journalists tended to use "sensationalism" and "yellow journalism" interchangeably. Debate over such newspaper content was among the most vigorous during this era. Predictably, practitioners of sensationalism and yellow journalism (particularly the two who were most responsible) defended their product, while journalists of the so-called "white papers" criticized their saffron counterparts.

Arguments for New Journalism content

A poem in *Life* magazine featured a jab at the dual personality of Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World*. It ended, "Wise counsel here, wild yarns the other side,/Page six its Jekyl and page one its Hyde;/At the same time conservative and rash,/*The World* supplies us good advice and trash."[84] Pulitzer, while acknowledging the poem was clever, called it "absolute nonsense" (except, of course, for the complements concerning the editorial page).[85] A newspaper should avoid printing items that are suggestive or salacious or that could lower readers' moral tone, he said, but it cannot shirk from its duty of printing news, even if it deals with wrecks, fires, divorces or lynchings.[86] This type of event piques readers' curiosity, an effect. A year before he died, he wrote a scathing letter to his staff criticizing the *World*'s poor coverage of an explosion at the Los Angeles *Times* building which had killed 20 people. "What is the matter with twenty people killed?" he asked, demanding to know whose judgment led to the placement. "The story is put on the thirteenth page of the Main News section. I wonder it was not put on the eighty-seventh page. Has there been any story like this for years? . . . . It was worth first page position, more than that it was a dreadful story."[87] More important to Pulitzer was keeping the public informed about negative news which could knock democracy off its feet. "There is not a crime, there is not a dodge, there is not a trick, there is not a swindle, there is not a vice which does not live by secrecy," he said. "Get these things out in the open, describe them, attack them, ridicule them in the press, and sooner or later public opinion will sweep them away."[88]

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[83] Mott, American Journalism..., 539.

[84] "New York Newspaper Directory, Revised," Life, quoted in Ireland, An Adventure with a Genius..., 106.

[85] Joseph Pulitzer to Alleyne Ireland, quoted in Ibid, 115.

William Randolph Hearst, who borrowed and distended many of Pulitzer's techniques, boasted that his newspapers were sensational. Once while he headed the San Francisco *Examiner*, a man accused him of running a sensational paper. Hearst responded that he hoped it *was* sensational and then asked the man why he did not like sensationalism. Because sensations were usually false, the man responded. Hearst concluded that a major objection to newspapers centered not upon sensationalism, then, but upon the lack of foundation of truth. The true sensation, he said, is therefore much to be preferred over any other sort of news.[89] "No one knows better than the intelligent newspaper man that truth is stranger than fiction," he wrote.

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[86] Joseph Pulitzer to Alleyne Ireland, cited in Ibid, 114.

[87] Joseph Pulitzer to Charles M. Lincoln, 10 November 1910, quoted in Seitz, Joseph Pulitzer..., 419.

[88] Joseph Pulitzer to Alleyne Ireland, quoted in Ireland, An Adventure with a Genius..., 115.

[89] William Randolph Hearst, "Pacific Coast Journalism," Overland, April 1888, 404.

"Indeed, this is the great reason why the newspaper holds its own against the novel and play."[90] Hearst then revealed that Pulitzer had cabled him asking his opinion on the main cause of the New York *World*'s success. "Being in an honest mood, I was half inclined to reply, 'Intelligent sensationalism,'" Hearst wrote.[91] He added that a striking merit of sensational papers was that they were — had to be, in fact — independent; otherwise, they would have to distance themselves from sensations. The old partisan newspapers which distorted everything to suit its opinions were not what readers wanted anymore, he said.[92]

Opposition to New Journalism content

One of the harshest critics of yellow journalism was E. L. Godkin. At the close of the century he described the press as "villainous," "silly" and "frivolous" and that it served an immature public.[93] The press, he said, was standing between his generation and the light and was the "great enemy of good government and of rational views of human affairs."[94] Furthermore, he blamed the press for New York's greatest decline of morals in history[95] and for failing to live up to its expectation of teaching purer laws and better manners.[96]

Another strong opponent of yellow journalism was Midwest journalist William Rockhill Nelson. The Kansas City *Star* owner admonished his editors never to allow malice to taint anything or anybody.[97] While as a business man he wanted as many readers as possible, his view on remaining the top paper in Kansas City was to claim the 30,000 or so thinking readers; losing them, he said, would mean the *Star*'s demise. "[D]on't ever forget that this would be a mighty poor world without the preachers and schoolmarms," he told his staff, "and these we must have behind the Star if we are to lead in our field."[98] Two examples illuminate his disgust for yellow journalism. On one occasion, a young editor of another publication proudly sent a copy of his new paper for Nelson to critique. Nelson's response was clear. "It made the same sort of impression upon me that a man would who came into my presence dressed in ill-fitting gaudy clothing and talking in loud and vulgar tones," Nelson wrote. "Such a man, I would know at first glance and hearing was without stability and character." He encouraged the young journalist to let his newspaper be a gentleman and appeal to the best people.[99] Nelson spoke even more explicitly to a member of his own staff on another occasion. While Nelson was away from office one day, a city editor published a story which he thought would be a big break for him — a juicy tale of a clergyman involved in a scandal. When Nelson returned the next morning, the city editor asked him for his opinion of the story. "I thought it was an infernal outrage that no decent newspaper would have printed and that only a damned ass would have put out," Nelson ranted. When the gasping editor asked if that meant Nelson did not need his services any longer, Nelson snapped, "By God, could I make it any plainer?"[100]

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[90] Ibid.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] E. L. Godkin to Charles Eliot Norton, 12 January 1895, quoted in William M. Armstrong, ed., The Gilded Age Letters of E. L. Godkin (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1974), 462.

[94] E. L. Godkin to William James, 29 December 1895, quoted in Ibid, 476-477.

[95] E. L. Godkin to Charles Eliot Norton, 29 November 1898, cited in Ibid, 515.

[96] E. L. Godkin to Charles Eliot Norton, 22 January 1902, cited in Ibid, 547.

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[97] William Rockhill Nelson to Kansas City *Star* editors, cited in Icie F. Johnson, William Rockhill Nelson and the Kansas City Star (Kansas City: Burton Publishing Company, 1935),

[98] William Rockhill Nelson to Kansas City *Star* staff, cited in Ibid, 126-127.

[99] William Rockhill Nelson to young editor, quited in Ibid, 141.

[100] William Rockhill Nelson to *Star* city editor, quited in Ibid, 118-119.

Other condemnations of sensationalism came from lesser known journalists. Edwin L. Shuman shamed sensationalists for polluting society and making the worse appear the better reason. "Out upon those soulless sheets that sneer at honor and purity—that treat crimes as a peepshow and blasphemy as a joke!" he wrote.[101] "Think how glibly the printing press tells abroad all evil—how it instructs the young and vicious in crime and murder—how it teaches base thoughts to grow into base deeds."[102] He railed against the "iron press," which had the power to overthrow governments but which was now shaking men's faith in God and humanity and introducing readers' souls to "a thousand new griefs—a thousand new temptations."[103] Horace White aimed at a different problem. He blamed sensationalism for avoiding serious issues which required citizens to think. Yellow papers, he said, had a tendency to "steer clear of all blizzards and fog-banks of public opinion which might temporarily chill the circulation.[104] Newspapers which followed this slippery slope, he warned, could bring about a catastrophe: a Republic tippling over without knowing it was in trouble. "If such a calamity comes it will come through bad journalism, not a subsidized press but a brain-softening press, such as we have now in large and growing measure," he said.[105]

Conclusion

Julian Ralph told another story of a friend who, while traveling through a wilderness, came across a cowboy pulling a steer with a rope. The cowboy apparently had lost his horse, and dragging the steer in the blistering heat, with no water in sight and no town around for 50 miles, was quite a challenge. Ralph's friend asked where the cowpoke was dragging the "cow" and was told to a town two days' travel away. "Why! What makes you try to pull a cow all that distance?" he asked. "Because I've got it to do," the cowboy answered laconically. That reply, Ralph concluded, was "at once the motto, the excuse, and the exultant battle-cry" of journalists in his time: that once called on to do the work, "he is elated, nerved up, and pushed forward in a degree which swells with the difficulty of the task."[106]

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[101] Shuman, Steps Into Journalism..., 223.
[102] Ibid, 219.
[103] Ibid, 220.
[104] White, North American Review, 30.
[105] Ibid, 31.

Journalists in the 1880s and 1890s were clearly proud of their profession. They viewed their field as more powerful than presidents, kings and tyrants. Thanks to their predecessors in the middle of the 19th Century, their profession was now independent of parties and political rings. To them, journalism was a perpetual-motion machine that kept society in order and that needed no entry ladder of educational instruction. As John Cockerill wrote, journalism was "the greatest marvel of the intellectual and material powers of man at the period of their highest development."[107] Humanity was on the move, and so was journalism.

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[106] Julian Ralph, The Making of a Journalist (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1903), 5-6.
[107] John A. Cockerill, Cosmopolitan, 696.

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WOMEN'S MORAL REFORM PERIODICALS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY: A CULTURAL FEMINIST ANALYSIS

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Women's Moral Reform Periodicals of the Nineteenth Century: A Cultural Feminist Analysis

Abstract

Researchers have observed that the women's volunteer reform societies of the nineteenth century very probably constituted the roots of American feminism. However, these observations have brought contradictions with them, the most central being that these women carried forward the "Cult of True Womanhood" at the same time as they engaged in what can be readily interpreted as feminist activism.

This paper attempts to analyze women's reform periodicals, focusing on the national publication, The Advocate and Family Guardian, from a cultural feminist perspective. This perspective, its historical tradition defined by Josephine Donovan, provides a theoretical framework for analyzing these reform periodicals as formative feminism, ameliorating the contradictions that the dichotomous perspective of liberal feminism tends to exacerbate.

From the theoretical perspective of cultural feminism, women's moral reform periodicals of the nineteenth century, particularly The Advocate, find their place at the forefront of an intellectual and activist feminist tradition. No longer on the margins, they can be more fully incorporated as an important aspect of journalism history.

Women's Moral Reform Periodicals of the Nineteenth Century: A Cultural Feminist Analysis

Introduction

Female moral reform periodicals of the nineteenth century were messengers for Christian women leading a white middle- and upper-class Protestant crusade for the reform of a corrupt and a, literally, dirty society.

In her scholarship on American women, which focused on urban dynamics from 1800 to 1860, researcher Barbara Berg (1978) traced the roots of American feminism to the women's volunteer societies of the nineteenth century. Such an observation is a recognition of how bold were the social actions of these women, including certainly, the publication of those efforts. But such a tracing is not unproblematic. It leads to the question: Did these women truly transcend the sphere delineated by the "Cult of True Womanhood"? (Welter, 1973). Researcher Mary Ryan (1979) observed a contradiction when such a feminist lens is used to examine these women, their reforms and their publications. In reflecting the female moral reform movement itself, the leading moral reform periodical, The Advocate of Moral Reform, presented what Ryan viewed as contradictory tendencies. While it exposed the double standard of sexual morality, it also "reveled in portraying the ... nineteenth-century stereotype of "'true womanhood'" (p. 67).

Historian Carroll Smith-Rosenberg (1985) observed in her feminist reconstruction of Victorian America:

> We turned to women's religious enthusiasm, tracing the

> influence of millenial religion on women's reform activities and role expansion. Some women who held back from self-conscious feminism, we discovered, had nevertheless assumed innovative roles as urban philanthropists, public-health advocates, opponents of child labor (p. 14).

Categorizing women's moral reform as skirting the feminist movement has led to classifiying the women reformers outside of feminist tradition. By extension, their publications, then also fall into the margins of theoretical examination, marginalizing their importance.

Theorist Josephine Donovan (1994) has proposed what may be an appropriate theoretical framework for an examination of these societies and their publications, cultural feminism. Whereas this term has been in use to describe aspects of the second-wave feminism of the latter twentieth century, Donovan expands it to describe "the second major tradition of nineteenth-century feminist theory" (p. 214, endnote 2), the first being that of Enlightenment-driven liberal feminism. Whereas liberal feminism, firmly ensconced in liberal political theory, is often employed in examining the media, it is not the most helpful perspective for analyzing these types of women's periodicals. With liberal feminism's emphasis on the individual and equality, contradictions emerge. While these magazines did advocate some legislative reform and more rights for women, this aspect was not at the heart the social reform they enabled -- reforming prostitutes, sheltering, educating and training women in the professions and at home. Its inheritance from the liberal political tradition from which it emerged is liberal feminism's blindness to the homefront, community building and traditional women's organizing that causes it to be a less than adequate theoretical perspective for examination of these magazines.

Donovan (1994) cites that contemporary cultural feminists exhibit their intellectual heritage in this theoretical tradition in their view that "women's political value system may be derived from traditional women's culture and applied to the public realm." However, she maintains

> Contemporary feminists are more aware of the need to systematize cultural feminist ideology, and to teach it, than were their nineteenth-century predecessors who ... tended to feel that pacifist and reformist attitudes were inherent in women's nature (p. 62)

Cultural feminism, as defined by Donovan, provides a helpful perspective for resolving the perceived contradiction Ryan notes. Cultural feminism dissolves the dichotomy between domestic and public action that the liberal feminist perspective only exacerbates. Donovan (1994) relies on the writings of Margaret Fuller, credited with initiating the theory (p. 32), who articulated its tenets in her book Woman in the Nineteenth Century, originally published in 1845. Donovan shows cultural feminist theory as an intellectual tradition emerging from Romanticism and, more directly, from American Transcendentalism, a movement that had as its basis a reliance on the superiority of intuition over reason. The work of the moral reformers in the dirty city streets initially predated Fuller's articulation and was anything but romantic. However, their vision for cultural transformation is where the romanticism is transformed into a sustaining optimism for these women as they ventured into the depths of the cities, bringing forth forgotten women in order to train and educate them for their own independence.

In an attempt to resolve apparent contradictions, cultural feminist theory is relied upon in an examination of women's reform periodicals, particularly relying on the national reform publication, The Advocate. This study attempts to strengthen that tracing of cultural feminism back into the nineteenth century, to provide an appropriate theoretical framework in which to situate women's reform periodicals -- not only within that tradition, but at the forefront of it.

Background

The New York Female Moral Reform Society was founded -- and began publication of what became the national reform periodical, The Advocate -- during an era known as the "Second Great Awakening." This was a time when "a millennial spirit pervaded efforts at transforming United States society," and reformers "sought not merely social change but spiritual transformation, the moral regeneration of the world"(Ginzberg, 1986, p. 601).

From the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, The Advocate was the foremost messenger in the crusade for moral reform. The magazine had two specific missions: to convert prostitutes and to broadcast the occasions of seduction. It did not blame women for prostitution. Rather, it laid a full measure of responsibility on the men who perpetrated acts of seduction. It also educated children against becoming either victims or future perpetrators of lewd behavior.

A group of women followed in the footsteps of missionary John McDowall, who had issued a controversial report in 1832 on the need for reform of New York society. In spite of the public censure McDowall incurred, the women sought further inspiration in the revivals of theologian and reformer Charles G. Finney and formed their own society, the New York Female Moral Reform Society, on May 12, 1834. (Smith-Rosenberg, 1985, pp. 111-112). In the fall of 1834, the Society voted to purchase McDowall's Journal and "transform it into a national women's paper with an exclusively female staff" (p. 115). The journal was named The Advocate of Moral Reform and begun in 1835.

> [A] little band of Christian women, whose attention had been directed to an agency of Satan that was operating unchecked [...] decided to combine their labors, and seek the co-operation of others in a work of PREVENTION.
>
> Among their first efforts was the commencement of a periodical, whose design was to exalt the law of God, and thus prevent its violation--to guard the domestic hearth from the invasion of the Spoiler, thus preventing the fall of the innocent; and, as far as practicable, to

> produce such a reform in the public sentiment, that the morally debased should be estimated according to their true character, and made to feel that access to the favor of the virtuous could only be secured by being pure in heart. ("Thirteenth Annual Report," 1847)

The eight-page publication, tight with print, continued its mission through name changes, in 1847, to The Advocate of Moral Reform and Family Guardian and, in 1849, to The Advocate and Family Guardian, which it remained until ceasing publication in 1941.

Another of a number of women's reform societies founded during this Second Great Awakening was the New England Female Moral Reform Society. At the time this society began its publication, The Friend of Virtue, the New York Female Moral Reform Society was reestablishing itself as the national organization, the American Female Moral Reform Society. As a regional society, the New England society could ultimately pull members from the national society and subscribers from its magazine. Although The Advocate recognized The Friend of Virtue as competition for subscribers -- and its society as competition for members -- it viewed the publication as a sister in the cause.

> The formation of the New England Moral Reform Society, (a sister enterprise that sustains a periodical--is doing much good, and worthy the encouragement of all friends of Reform,) has tended to lessen the number of

> the New England subscribers and Auxiliaries, but we believe they are still efficient in the cause, and therefore the early bond remains unchanged. ("Twelfth Annual Report," 1846)

The magazine was begun in 1838, about one year after the New England Female Moral Reform Society was formed.

> The 'Friend of Virtue' has been the youthful companion of this society.... We have high hopes of this young friend, and would gladly do all in our power to assist the Parent Society in sustaining it. It is dear to our hearts ... and an endeared home companion, from its earliest infancy. (Jones, 1840)

As a small journal of about 9" by 5", the 16-page publication carved for itself a large mission:

> The Friend of Virtue: A Semi-Monthly Periodical, Devoted to the Cause of Moral Purity, Namely, By holding out the Light of Divine Truth on the subject, by aiding in the right training of Children and youth, exposing the prevalence of Vice, and the wiles of the Destroyer, by treating the Libertine with merited contempt, extending the hand of sympathy and kindness to the friendless, homeless, unprotected Female, by reclaiming the Wanderers, and respectfully soliciting our Law-makers to defend our sacred rights--our most endearing social privileges. (1849).

The magazine was transformed into a monthly called The Home

Guardian in 1868. Despite the society's having argued its mission since its inception, the controversial phrase "moral reform" discouraged contributions and subscribers. The change in name was consistent with other societies and their publications, although the American Female Moral Reform Society did not remove the phrase from its publication until 1849, when that publication became The Advocate and Family Guardian.

The Seventh Commandment was the main subject addressed in these publications. (Following the Exodus text, which is in common Protestant use, this is the Commandment that warns against committing adultery.) Controversy surrounded how publicly adultery should be addressed. For example, a reader recounted a conversation between a woman and her niece in which the aunt's dislike of the minister was brought about because he refused to preach on the Seventh Commandment.("For the Friend of Virtue," 1840). Female reform publications, however, addressed this issue directly.

> It is objected to Moral Reform Efforts, that by these means, the curiosity of the young is excited, and that they know more about the developments of the seventh commandment than they otherwise would. ... But these facts are all calculated to show the terrible consequences of the sin of licentiousness.(Unsigned, 1840)

In 1847, the name of the national publication was changed to The Advocate of Moral Reform and Family Guardian to downplay the phrase "moral reform," which many people still found objectionable (Editor, 1846). With this same concern in mind, the next year, the society renamed itself the American Female Moral Reform and Guardian Society. Their Home for the Friendless was also opened in July 1847 (Northrup, 1934, p. 30), and soon it was incorporated into the title of the society. Both name of the publication and the society were further modified until The Advocate and Family Guardian was the official organ of the American Female Guardian Society and Home for the Friendless (January 1, 1859).

Analysis

Journalism historian Susan Henry (1993) cited the Advocate as an excellent example of "the journalism produced by the women who lived and believed most fervently in the values" of women's culture, a separate sphere in which women "developed shared, female-identified values, rituals, relationships, and modes of communication that were sources of satisfaction and strength"(p. 349). The society itself noted that without the journal

> there is every reason to believe the usefulness of the Society would have been greatly circumscribed, perhaps [...] wholly suspended. [...]
>
> The sole aim of all its publications has been to carry out a specific object of the Society, viz.; the formation of a correct public sentiment, relative to the prevention of vice, the discharge of Christian duty in meeting the claims of the young, friendless, destitute

> and exposed, and the obligations of the family to extend its guardianship and moral influence over those within its reach.(June 1, 1859).

Empassioned in their cause to reform society's morals, these women expanded their influence beyond their domestic sphere. Smith-Rosenberg (1985) postulated that the women were able to carry with them the legitimation of their authority by their belief in the "Cult of True Womanhood"(p. 109). Their belief in the essential differences between women and men, particularly in the moral superiority inherent in women's nature, placed them in a formative stage of the cultural feminist tradition. These beliefs guided their vision of cultural reform, that went "beyond the fundamentally rationalist and legalistic thrust of Enlightenment liberal theory. Instead of focusing on political change, feminists holding these ideas look for a broader cultural transformation" (Donovan, 1994, p. 31).

Editors of moral reform publications advocated cultural restructuring, gathering their authority from the domestic sphere and expanding it outwards from the family to the larger society. "The Family takes precedence. It was instituted in the Garden of Eden. The State is of later origin" (Editor, 1847). They used the family as a natural stepping stone to personalizing problems of the nation.

These magazines were edited by women, and they made it clear that these women were ladies as well.

> ..The Advocate is, as it professes to be, EXCLUSIVELY

> under the direction of the American Female Moral Reform Society--it is edited entirely by a lady, under the control and supervision of a Publishing Committee, composed from the Board of Managers of the Society. (Publisher, 1844)

The Friend of Virtue, too, made it clear that it was "edited exclusively BY A LADY." (Publisher, 1848).Nevertheless, these ladies were not given to euphemisms, but addressed social problems in a straight-forward manner.

Miss Rebecca Eaton, editor of The Friend of Virtue, took her mission seriously, acknowledging that the

> responsibility of editing this little work is deeply realized.... One circumstance we have regarded as very encouraging; viz.: many who have been opposed to Moral Reform efforts, and especially opposed to Moral Reform publications, having been induced to read our little sheet, have acknowledged that they found it useful themselves as Christians, useful to their families, and that they believed it would be useful to community. (Editor, 1851)

Unlike in other papers of the day, these editors allowed many women's voices to be heard. Readers submitted accounts of seduction, which they could share nowhere else, such as a story about a woman who was raped while traveling. The editor cautioned, "Let those of the weaker sex who may read it, be admoninished never to travel alone in a public conveyance, till a renovated state of society is apparent" (Editor, 1844). In the New England periodical, a woman wrote that when she was young a "pretended gentleman" had actually been a stalker. But for the advice of the Friend of Virtue, she wondered "what would have become of" her ("Communicated," 1851).

Often, women readers displayed a sense of moral responsibility similar to that of the editors, as in this example about a secular magazine's recent frontispiece:

> I feel prompted by a sense of duty, as a friend to the young, as a friend to good morals, as a friend to purity, as the rightful guardian of my daughter's chastity, 'in thought, speech and behavior,' to protest against such exquisitely immodest prints.(A Plain Countrywoman, 1847)

Moral reform periodicals ran reports from the reform associations, which used The Advocate as their mouthpiece. This group's sentiment typifies the ostracism of women who attempted to publicly broach issues of rape, incest, or prostitution:

> As a society of a little band of females, we are surrounded by discouragements; we have not the hearty co-operation of our ministers. [...]
>
> We regard the Advocate as well calculated to enlighten and instruct and believe it may be, in many instances, the monitor and protector of the unwary and innocent.(Newhall, 1844)

The Advocate would boldly speak out about matters ministers hesitated to address, subtly subverting the organized religious hierarchy. Moral reform was a subject ministers were not addressing from the pulpit. Yet, lay efforts were objected to on the grounds that they were a "promiscuous exhibition of truths or facts relative to a subject" (Wright, 1840). Those who took objection argued that behaviors such as adultery were not appropriate topics for public discussion, much less by women. Reform advocates, impassioned with ridding society of such vices as prostitution and seduction, found themselves consistently called on to rationalize their mission and that of their publications. "Moral Reform we regard as a broad subject .... Consequently the details of vice, and what is technically called Moral Reform, include but a small portion of the topics presented to our readers" (Editor, 1851).

Educated, morally righteous women, the editors of these publications attributed much of society's ills to the vast number of ignorant people. In addition to the "partial silence on the pulpit," wrong training in childhood was shown to be one of the primary causes of crime ("Cause and the Remedy").

The bulk of the target audience was mothers, who were held responsible for the formation of the moral character of their children. Pages were filled with cautionary tales, such as the analysis of a news item sent in by a reader: A man was imprisoned for molesting children on their way home from school. The reader pointed out that with two of the girls molested, the crime was not known until their mothers noticed they had contracted a disease and began asking questions. The court nearly set the man free because the children did not cry out at the time of the offense.

> Is it not a duty that mothers owe their children to teach them, if insulted in this way, to scream? Should they not, as they value their safety, teach them to distinguish between right and wrong on all subjects that they may need to understand .... (H--S, 1844)

The Friend of Virtue often began its articles with "ladies." On occasion, however, the magazine incorporated men into household and child-rearing recommendations with its appeals to "parents." In an even-handed address, the Reverend Mr. Tisdale suggested "a few things for the particular consideration of mothers, but which are, by no means, to be disregarded by fathers. I shall, therefore, generally use the term parents" (Tisdale,1840). The editor cautioned parents that if they would not encourage children to be honest, productive and healthy, they were paving the way for the devil. If not under the tutelage of conscientious parents, children could be led astray in numerous ways.

> Some are led away "by their own lusts and enticed," some, in consequence of habits of indolence ... some by that dangerous familiarity indulged in at fashionable parties ... some by novel-reading, some by those polluting details told and retold at our common schools ... some by reading those impure couplets found in

> sweetmeats bought at the confectionary's, some, when walking the streets, are allured away by the panderers of vice, some by their mothers, (those mothers who monsters prove,) and some, even by their fathers are encouraged, or even constrained, to walk in the road to death. (Editor, 1849)

While editors held that women were different from men, and, in that difference, morally superior, they were not blind to the potential for there being lazy and irresponsible women among them. Treating this lack as ignorance, they carried their critique of society back into the realm of the domestic sphere. They urged mothers to keep uppermost the children's physical, as well as spiritual, needs. The Friend of Virtue considered it necessary, not selfish, for mothers to attend to their own health. "How important an element of domestic order and happiness is the health of the mother! A disordered house, a table alternately extravagant and mean, a group of children with untidy persons and rude manners, too surely indicate the absence of a mother's care (Mother's Journal, 1840). Contrary to conventional widsom, mothers were urged to encourage the physical education of their daughters. Through editors and contributors, The Friend of Virtue advocated plain food, exercise, and a good "romp," "Let us give our daughters the training which makes our sons healthy, and they will be so likewise" (Means and Ends, 1840). If mothers neglected these basics, they did so with serious moral consequence.

> Do not mothers, by neglecting important duties in the training of their children, help to swell the dark catalogue of crime? Mothers, I ask you this serious question; are you not educating your daughters so as to make them a burden to their husbands? ...
>
> And now, dear mothers, let me give you a little advice, and do not be shocked at the seeming vulgarity. Instead of consulting half a dozen doctors, ... give your daughters healthy employment; let them rise early in the morning, clean the parlors.... Let them cultivate the flowers.... ("For the Friend of Virtue," 1850)

Mothers were recognized as their daughters' role models, who

> can mould and fashion the minds and manners, the habits and feelings of their children, especially those of daughters, into almost any form they please. But in doing this, they must also see to it that they are, themselves, what they would wish their children to be.("The Training of Children," 1852)

Female moral reform societies did not generally openly espouse woman's rights. Berg (1978) makes a helpful distinction between feminism and women's rights, stating that the two are not synonymous (pp. 4-5). Nevertheless, Smith-Rosenberg (1985) credited the moral reform movement with being the forerunner of the woman's rights movement in the United States.

> Both groups found women's traditionally passive role intolerable. Both wished to assert female worth and

> values in a heretofore entirely male world. Both welcomed the creation of a sense of feminine loyalty and sisterhood that could give emotional strength and comfort to women isolated within their homes.... And it can hardly be assumed that the demand for votes for women was appreciably more radical than a moral absolutism which encouraged women to invade bordellos, befriend harlots, and publicly discuss rape, seduction, and prostitution. (p. 127)

Berg (1978) took this analysis further, stating that, especially in the 1840s and 1850s, The Advocate "continuously and explicitly refuted the traditional role assigned to antebellum women and urged a feminist critique of society." (note 45, p. 291). In spite of not espousing equal rights for women, more than a decade earlier than the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, which is traditionally recognized as the beginning of the U.S. women's rights movement, the moral reform societies advocated that for a good cause women should enlarge their sphere of influence.

Perhaps spawned by the reformers' recognition that they were disrupting women's economic livelihood when they discouraged prostitution, these reformers became interested in women's economy and began addressing female labor on the pages of The Advocate. For example, in 1859 the society developed a sewing machine fund through which they could supply the "most worthy with sewing machines" ("The Sewing Machine Fund," 1860). They bought sewing machines from manufacturers and sold them to the independent seamstresses, receiving installment payments of $3 to $5 a month. After one year, the fund had distributed forty-two sewing machines, and most of the money had been repaid. (Northrup, 1934, p. 45).

More than addressing labor, however, The Advocate enabled women to work, most notably on its own pages. The Advocate, the "eldest offspring of the Society," ("Twenty-Sixth Annual Report," 1860) was a successful. Circulation increased fairly steadily, a trend that persisted through the Civil War, although the high price of paper during the war forced some thinner issues (Editor, 1863). There was a slight decline in circulation in the post-war years, the 1868 annual report showing a circulation of 38,000, a drop of 3,000 from a peak of 41,000 in 1864. Even though The Advocate had a practice of circulating as many as half of the issues without cost ("Thirteenth Annual Report," 1847), the publication was operated at a profit. Much of the profit from the Advocate and the other tracts that the society published went toward the society's home for the destitute.

The Friend of Virtue contained advertisements, most often for moral tracts such as "Solitary Vice" for sale at the office. Although the editor on occasion complained of financial difficulties, these seemed to be more generally associated with the moral reform society than the magazine itself (Editor, 1849). Profits from the magazine went toward sustaining operations that promoted the cause of moral purity, such as temporary shelters.

So, too, the national society housed victimized women, calling its shelter the House of Industry, a place where women were offered employment training, particularly the typesetting and printing of The Advocate. By June 1859, the publisher's box ran the line "Printed at the Home of Industry." By 1861 the paper was entirely produced by women. In spite of viewing this as an achievement, editors felt constrained to answer questions of social impropriety:

> To the inquiry, "Why should a benevolent society publish and print on their own premises, in a charitable institution?" we reply, the Society has issued a paper, as its organ with the public, during the twenty-five years of its existence, which facts without number have proved indispensible to the success of the enterprise.

The consolidation of operations being convenient and less expensive, the society also found the "experiment" of encouraging young girls "to live honestly by the work of their hands [...] not only self-sustaining but advantageous. (June 1, 1859).

After four years of being printed at the House of Industry's Home Chapel basement, the publication stated that "every branch of the business is satisfactorily performed" by the females in the home,

> not merely the type-setting [...] but the more difficult processes of the art, including the proof-reading and other complex details, being subject only to the general oversight of the superintendent of this department. There are now eight female employees regularly engaged,

> with two assisting occasionally. Three of these are deaf-mutes, who have already attained a satisfactory proficiency in those branches for which previous education had fitted them. This "corps" of laborers prepare the pages of the Advocate for stereotyping--it now being printed by steam from plates--print the wrappers, and fold the papers ready for mailing. [...]
>
> ... [W]e expect to graduate a number of young women as proficients in the course of a few years. (Angell, 1861)

Both from the standpoint of providing skills training for women and of producing publications at reasonable cost, the "experiment" of using in-house labor for printing The Advocate was deemed successful and was continued as normal practice. In this manner, The Advocate itself became the society's strongest voice and example for women's labor and the value of that labor, if performed by white women.

In the 1860s, The Advocate reflected the strife of the Civil War from a white upper-middle class Northern women's perspective. The society lost members with "the decided stand taken by the majority for the Union side." (Northrup, 1934, p. 44). The Advocate held that America was a "nation of mourners" with many family circles broken because of lives given to the country (Editor, 1865). These rends in the social fabric of the nation were seen as the great evil of the Civil War and, thus, the reuniting of the nation was the great triumph. Despite the society's passion for social reform, it was a blindly white interest; the division of the nation through succession was seen as a far greater evil than slavery (Editor, 1862). A reunited nation was celebrated on The Advocate's pages.

> For four long years treason has done her utmost to rend [the republic] in twain, to ruin if it could not rule it, and, lo! to-day it stands firmer than ever before. [...]
>
> And so we are now, as never before, a free people. Slavery having proved the main inciter and supporter of rebellion, a death-blow was struck at it, that the nation might not perish. (Editor, 1865)

Conclusions

The Friend of Virtue, having changed its name to The Home Guardian, adopted a more upbeat tone than its earlier didacticism of The Friend of Virtue. The publication acknowledged the shift in tone: "The Magazine ... seeks to enlighten and amuse the social circle, and foster a right love of home and all its tender ties" (July 1880). Instructive fiction became a staple of the magazine, which now regularly ran serials and recommended readings in popular magazines and books that passed its scrutiny.

This publication's crusade against immorality branched out to embrace other types of social reform, in particular, intemperance, called the "right arm" of licentiousness ("Thirty-sixth annual report," 1874). Its broadened mission and more popularized format pitting it against popular works, the magazine met its demise before the turn of the century, in 1892.

As the times changed, the national society continued to refocus its mission on housing the "friendless." During the depression of the 1870s, a women's shelter was opened. Increasingly, the mission of the society shifted from reforming women to housing children, providing a home for them until they were graduated from high school and ready to support themselves. (Northrup, 1934, pp. 78, 83). The phrase "Home for the Friendless," along with a print of the imposing Home, was added to the publication's masthead. The society eventually became the Woodycrest Youth Service.(Zophy, 1990, pp. 385-386). With the changing of the times and the recentering of its mission, the society survived well into the twentieth century.

As the moral reform activists and editors brought the values developed in women's domestic sphere out to bear on the public sphere, so, too, they brought the critique of public society back into the domestic sphere, urging mothers to exercise and educate their daughters. These publications were the voices of these women, editors and contributors, women who would not be silenced, even by the religion they revered.

Donovan points out the importance of the cultural feminist intellectual tradition: "Cultural feminism remains one of the most important traditions of feminist theory, if somewhat more sophisticated in form and political consciousness today than in the nineteenth century" (p. 62).

This study is an approach to journalism historian Henry's call (1993) for further research: "The Advocate is waiting to be studied by a journalism historian who can analyze it within the context of women's culture of the period" (p. 350). It is hoped that this paper suggests an appropriate theoretical framework to enable that research. Emerging from their times, the nineteenth century women's moral reform periodicals were instrumental in defining the intellectual and activist tradition of cultural feminism in the United States.

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'THE THIRD MOST VALUABLE NEWSPAPER PROPERTY IN CHICAGO': A HISTORY OF THE CHICAGO JOURNAL

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ABSTRACT:

Established in 1844, the *Chicago Evening Journal* was the city's oldest daily newspaper until 1929, when it was transformed into the tabloid *Daily Times*. This paper documents the history of this overlooked newspaper and its attempts to develop a market niche in which it could survive. After decades of publishing an evening paper aimed at a relatively small, affluent audience, new owners retargetted the paper at a mass audience in the 1890s. While the *Journal* sometimes turned a modest profit, over the long run they would probably have done better to keep their money in a bank or hide it under their mattress.

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'The Third Most Valuable Newspaper Property in Chicago': A History of the Chicago Journal

The *Chicago Journal* (1844-1929) does not figure in the standard histories of American journalism, nor has it attracted its own historian. The *Journal* is mentioned only in passing in most histories of Chicago journalism, and is discussed in a handful of dissertations comparing different local newspapers.[1] Yet it was Chicago's oldest daily newspaper, if rarely its most successful, for its entire life. And while most historians contend that the *Journal* died in 1929 when its name and subscription list were sold to the *Chicago Daily News*, the *Chicago Times* (which continues to this day as the *Chicago Sun-Times*) was immediately launched from the *Journal*'s office with the same owners, staff, presses and franchises.

Drawing upon surviving financial records and the papers of Richard Finnegan, who spent nearly his entire journalistic career on the *Journal* and the *Times*, ending as editor and publisher, this paper documents the history of this overlooked newspaper and discusses its attempts to develop a market niche in which it could survive. After decades of publishing an evening paper aimed at a relatively small, affluent audience, new owners retargeted the paper at a mass audience in the 1890s. While circulation did increase substantially, the *Journal* was never able to break out of the second tier of Chicago newspapers. And while its owners were sometimes able to make the paper turn a modest profit, over the long run they would probably have done better to keep their money in a bank or hide it under their mattresses.

Although the *Journal*'s date of birth is known, its ancestry is hazy. A contemporary described it in 1895 as "the veteran of the Chicago newspaper forces[,] founded upon the ruins of two predecessors -- the *Chicago American* and the *Express*.."[2] But the *Chicago American*, Chicago's first daily, ceased publication in 1841 -- nearly three years before the first issue of the *Journal* came off the press. The *Express* is more obscure, but shortly before the *American* ceased publication, a Chicagoan wrote a letter lamenting the *Express'* death as a serious blow to the Whig party.[3]

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[1] See, e.g., Bruce McKittrick Cole, "The Chicago Press and the Know-Nothings, 1850-1856," M.A. Dissertation, University of Chicago, 1948; John Erickson, "Newspapers and Social Values: Chicago Journalism, 1890-1910," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, 1973; Richard A. Matré, "The Chicago Press and Imperialism, 1899-1902," Ph.D. Thesis, Northwestern University, 1961; Morris Egenton Kenton, "Yellow Journalism and our Foreign-Born Population," M.A. Thesis, Columbia University, 1915.

[2] Willis J. Abbot, "Chicago Newspapers and Their Makers," *Review of Reviews* 11, June 1985, p. 660.

The *Evening Journal* was founded April 22, 1844, as a Whig organ, entering the Republican fold in 1853 (though as late as 1861 its editor referred to "this old Whig Journal" in a letter to Lincoln advisor David Davis). Founded by J. Young Scammon and other Clay supporters, the paper soon passed into the hands of editorialist Richard Wilson, who ran it until his death in 1856. At a testimonial dinner for his successor, Wilson was eulogized as a "public teacher":

> Richard L. Wilson was no mere partisan, no mere political hack... In the wildest excitement and struggles between the old Whig phalanx and the then Democratic party, he kept his columns free from personal abuse, political slang and party prize-fighting. Fairness, truthfulness and candor were written on every lineament of his character and, through his pen, were always stamped upon the columns of The Journal.[4]

The *Journal*'s contemporaries, however, saw the paper as more fiercely partisan. And while *Daily Democrat* publisher John Wentworth (then in the final stages of his political and editorial career) was among the speakers at the testimonial dinner, the papers had earlier been bitter rivals. The *Democrat* regularly complained that the *Journal* stole its telegraphed news :

> The Editor of the Journal heads one column of his paper with *'News by Telegraph.'* – This would be correct if it read *'News by Democrat,'* as the matter which it thus heads is taken verbatim from reports telegraphed through from the East at our expense. This can be seen by comparing our morning and their evening editions... If the Journal cannot afford to pay the Telegraph Company for their reports, it ought to have decency enough to give us credit for them.[5]

Richard Wilson's brother Charles then took over the paper, publishing it until he died in 1883 (though brother John Wilson conducted the paper from 1862 to 1864 while Charles served in the diplomatic corps in London), at which point it came under the control of Republican Party boss William

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[3] The *Chicago American* was issued from August 1, 1937 through June 28, 1841. Its account book, held in the Archives and Manuscripts Division of the Chicago Historical Society, show extensive job printing and advertising revenues, but little circulation income. Wm. Stuart laments the death of the *Express* in a May 30, 1841, letter to Edward Warren, held in a folder of Warren manuscripts at the Chicago Historical Society. However, Don Fehrenbacher (*Chicago Giant: A biography of "Long John" Wentworth,* Madison: American History Research Center, 1957, p. 25) also identifies the *Chicago Express* and the *Daily Journal* as successors to the *American*.

[4] "The Evening Journal Banquet," *Chicago Evening Journal*, Oct. 3 1864, clipping in H.M. Huguenin Papers, Chicago Historical Society. The speaker was George Bates.

[5] *Daily Democrat,* Feb. 17 1849 (see also Feb. 26 1849); excerpt in the Bessie L. Pierce papers, Box 39, folder Newspapers - Rivalries, Chicago Historical Society.

Sullivan.[6] Like its competitors, the *Journal* was burned out in the 1871 fire, but it continued uninterrupted publication amidst the disaster and after weeks of printing the paper on a hand press the *Journal* bought a new four-cylinder press.[7] Throughout this period, the *Journal* had a modest circulation, claiming 8,000 to 15,000 readers in a period when publishers routinely inflated their circulation reports. The upstart *Chicago Daily News*, the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Times* all boasted substantially larger circulations. The *Journal* published two editions daily (at 3 and 5 p.m.) until the 1870s, adding a Noon edition when the *Daily News* entered the market.[8]

Veteran journalist (and rabid Know Nothing) Slason Thompson came over from the *Herald* in 1891 to become editor of the *Journal*. Its circulation, Thompson later recalled, was limited by its 5 cent price "but was of high class and attracted the advertisers who sought quality rather than numbers." But the bulk of the circulation, he suggested, was downstate, attracted by the paper's late market coverage.[9] The *Journal* continued its virulent Republicanism under Thompson's editorship, denouncing Carter Harrison as a "friend of anarchy" when he (successfully) ran for mayor on the Democratic ticket in 1893. The *Journal* was fiercely partisan, both in its editorial and news columns, boasting what Slason Thompson described as "an enviable record as a think-and-thin supporter of the Republican party."[10]

John Wilson (Charles Wilson's nephew) bought the paper in 1894 from Samuel Farrar, who had bought the paper from Caroline Wilson, Charles Wilson's widow, and other stockholders the previous year. Farrar lasted only a year before being overwhelmed by the steady losses; Wilson did not last much longer. The *Journal* claimed 40,000 subscribers during this period (but probably had closer to 20,000 -- the *Tribune* claimed 75,000, the *News* 200,000, the *Times-Herald* 70,000, the *Inter-Ocean* 85,000 [though its claims were treated with derision by competitors]; the *Evening Post* and the *Press & Mail* claimed circulations in the 25,000 to 40,000 range), but as an elite 5-cent daily it was out of touch with Chicago's largely immigrant population. In 1891, for example, the *Journal* editorialized against immigrants' "barbarous names," urging that new citizens be compelled to take "a Christian surname."[11]

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[6] Andrew Shuman to David Davis, April 13 1861, David Davis Papers, Box 10 folder 63, Chicago Historical Society; *Story of Chicago In Connection with The Printing Business*, Chicago: Regan Printing House, 1912, pp. 129-31; John Erickson, "Newspapers and Social Values: Chicago Journalism, 1890-1910," Ph.D. Thesis, University of Illinois, 1973, pp. 148-49; "The Evening Journal Banquet," *Evening Journal*, Oct. 3 1864.

[7] Charles Wilson to Harper, "Monday, 27 [November] 1871." Chicago Fire, 1871, Personal Narratives, Chicago Historical Society.

[8] Victor Lawson to Zeil Deming, Nov. 26 1918, Victor Lawson Papers, Newberry Library, Chicago. By 1890, the *Journal* had agreed with other evening publishers to limit themselves to five editions daily. Lawson to W.H. Turner, March 12 1900, Victor Lawson Papers.

[9] Slason Thompson, *Way Back When*, Chicago: H.G. Adair, 1930, p. 291.

[10] Erickson, *op cit.*, p. 186; Thompson, *op cit.*, p. 291.

In 1895 the Chicago newspaper market was gripped by vicious competition as the penny papers fought to survive competition from the *Chicago Tribune,* which cut its price to a penny that year. Other papers were soon forced to follow suit; the *Journal* cut its price from 5 to 2 cents to try to stave off the increasingly heated competition. The *Journal* then ranked above only the lowly *Chicago Mail* in circulation (among the general circulation English-language press), but a contemporary analyst claimed that its circulation was "of the very highest character" and thus highly valued by advertisers. "It is now and long has been a profitable property." Later that year the *Journal* was purchased for $500,000 by the upstart Daily Press Company, owned by the Booth interests.[12]

George Booth had bought the failing *Chicago Mail* earlier that year, renaming it the *Daily Press* and soon buying the *Journal* to obtain its Associated Press and City Press franchises. Founded in 1881, the *Mail* repeatedly boasted of its new-found success. In 1886, the *Mail* claimed that its circulation has boomed from 14 to 15,000 daily to 46,422. The *Daily News'* S.S. Rogers was dubious, informing the paper's New York City advertising agent that "The Chicago Mail cannot certainly be making any money. This fact is evident to everybody at all familiar wit the newspaper business of Chicago." Nonetheless, in 1892 the *Mail* boasted that its rapid growth in the past two months was "unprecedented in the history of Chicago journalism." Without giving any actual numbers, beyond the claim that circulation had increased by 20,000 copies daily, the 8-page daily claimed to be number two in evening circulation:

> Among its evening competitors in the local field, The Mail claims: 1. That it is one of the best two advertising mediums. 2. That it holds second place in circulation, and that its growth has never been equaled by a Chicago newspaper. 3. That it is the best evening newspaper in

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[11] "Heathen Names," *Journal*, Nov. 10 1891, p. 4; Erickson, *op cit.*, pp. 203, 217-20; Records of Organization and Meeting of Chicago Evening Journal, Oct. 11 1893 (the paper lost $2,428.54 in its first month under Farrar), Oct. 4, 1894. Richard J. Finnegan Papers, Box 10, folder 1, Chicago Historical Society.

Chicago Daily News publisher Victor Lawson, who prided himself on the accuracy of his papers' circulation claims, gave the following circulations for 1893: *News* 200,000, *Record* 135,019, *Herald* 75,000, *Tribune* 70,000, *Inter-Ocean* 60,000, *Post* 35,000, *Times* 35,000, *Journal* 20,000, *Mail* 20,000 [with a note that it fluctuated widely], *Dispatch* 10,000, *Globe* 5,000. He also provided circulation figures for several foreign-language and specialized dailies. Lawson to American Newspaper Directory, August 2 1893, Victor Lawson Papers.

[12] Willis J. Abbot, "Chicago Newspapers and Their Makers," *Review of Reviews* 11, June 1895, pp. 648, 661.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Chicago...[13]

Several weeks later, the *Mail* boasted that it was the only penny paper in the city receiving the full United Press report.[14] The paper aimed at a working-class audience, combining crime and other sensationalist news with listings of average grocery prices and entertainment and sporting features. In 1892 it backed the Democratic Party and favored arbitration of labor disputes, but had little use for the still-emerging corporate order:

> When capital usurps the role of tyrant it must have something to sustain it, and that something must bear arms and be ready to shoot and kill.... It is not the abolishment of Pinkertons which is needed, but the lessening of the power of capital. So long as capital is allowed by law to override the poor, just so long will it have a demand for 'hired assassins' ... It isn't Pinkertonism that so much needs wiping out as the absolute power of the heartless class which is fattening on the sweat of some other fellow's brow.[15]

The *Mail* went through several changes of ownership (and was often reduced from its usual eight to four pages) and returned to the Republican Party before ending up in George Booth's hands in July 1895. The Booth-Scripps interests restored the paper's populist orientation, supporting the free silver wing of the Democratic Party and publishing a letter from rail union leader Eugene V. Debs (though continuing to blast anarchists and socialists). In 1895 the *Mail*'s editor told Booth that he had "go[ne] as far as seems wise on the side of the workingmen... We must get right down with the people." He also proposed slashing the paper's bulk rates (but making it nonreturnable) to boost circulation: "I feel that we must devise ways and means for disposing of say thirty thousand papers a day, even if at a most nominal price." In September the paper was renamed the *Evening Press and Mail*; by the end of the month it was simply the *Evening Press* (the staff box inside announced that the paper was owned by Booth's *Grand Rapids Evening Press*). The paper's advertising rate base claimed 20,000 circulation, though a financial report issued shortly before the *Journal* was acquired listed the circulation at 14,000. (That report revealed some dubious accounting practices: of $100,000 capital, $33,049.16 was invested

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13. "The Mail's Marvelous Growth," *Chicago Mail*, May 20 1892, p. 6. "The Chicago Mail," *Illustrated Graphic News*, Aug. 21 1886, p. 398; S.S. Rogers to A.H. Siegfried, Dec. 29 1888, Victor F. Lawson Papers - Outgoing Letters by Rogers & Wells, Newberry Library, Chicago; Arthur Pound, *The Only Thing Worth Finding: The Life and Legacies of George Gough Booth*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1964, p. 159.

14. *Chicago Mail*, July 8, 1892.

15. "Capital, Not Pinkertons" (editorial), *Chicago Mail*, July 11 1892, p. 4. For Democratic stance see, e.g., October 30 1891 issue boosting a straight Democratic ticket. On August 10 1885, the paper editorialized that it "favor[ed] the protection of honest labor in all its rights and privileges [but] will not be the apologist for communism.... In brief, The Mail will be the people's paper." The same edition announced that the paper was Republican without apology.

in plant, $20,000 in franchises, $14,000 in the circulation list, and $45,000 as the value of the advertising business, representing the volume of advertising sold the year before Booth bought the paper. The balance was carried on the books as goodwill.) George Booth bought the *Journal* for $400,000 in 1895, and the *Press* and the *Journal* were merged on Nov. 25 1895 as a penny paper under the editorship of Slason Thompson.[16] (George Booth was the majority share-holder in the reorganized Evening Press Company; after the sale former *Journal* publisher John Wilson held a 28 percent stake and controlled the paper's long-term lease on school board property, James Scripps [Booth's father-in-law] 18 percent and Ralph Booth 3.6 percent.) While the Booth interests formally repositioned the paper as politically independent, its news columns remained vigorously partisan -- when Democratic Mayor Harrison was re-elected in 1901, the *Journal* published no election returns.[17]

Whatever the *Journal*'s financial record before it was repositioned as a penny paper (no financial records survive for its first five decades, though the frequency of ownership changes in the early 1890s certainly suggests a less-than-prosperous property), it was at best only marginally profitable in the years that followed Booth's 1895 purchase despite his and subsequent owners' long experience in publishing. *Journal* circulation rose by a reported 40,000 copies daily in the first year following the purchase, but the owners had to kick in $175,102.10 in order to cover the paper's deficits. George Booth told his partners that it would take another $100,000 to put the paper on a paying basis and take its circulation above 100,000 daily. But once the reorganization was completed, Booth said, the *Journal* would be the "third most valuable newspaper property in Chicago."[18] By 1898 the *Journal* claimed a circulation of 138,000, but its competitors were scornful:

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16. Chicago Journal Directors Minutes, Nov. 16 1895, and Chicago Journal Stockholders Meeting Minutes, Dec. 10 1896, Richard Finnegan Papers, Box 10 folder 2; Pound, *op cit.*, pp. 162-63, 165-67. It is impossible to provide exact dates for this correspondence between *Mail* editor Turner, George Booth and Marcus Pollasky, as Pound provides no source notes for his quotations from the Booth family papers.

Booth was first listed as publisher in July 1895; the Sept. 2 1895 issue was titled the *Evening Press and Mail;* the Sept. 26 issue was the *Evening Press.* On Nov. 25 the paper appeared under the name *Evening Journal and Evening Press;* On Dec. 5 1895 the *Evening Press* name was moved below the dateline, and it soon was relegated to the staff box. The *Mail*'s January 4 1895 masthead proclaimed that it was "The leading Evening Republican Newspaper," while a house ad announced that "Republican principles will prevail... because the people have decided that they mean peace and prosperity."

17. Erickson, *op cit.*, p. 217.

18. Evening Press Stockholders Meeting Minutes, Dec. 10, 1896; Evening Press Co. Board of Directors Minutes, July 15, 1895 and Nov. 16, 1895. Chicago Journal Company Minutes Book, June 27, 1895 to Jan. 10, 1910. Richard J. Finnegan Papers, Box 10 folder 2, Chicago Historical Society. (all subsequent references to Journal Minutes are from this volume unless otherwise specified)

> The Journal is beating itself by the ridiculous claim of more than 100,000 circulation... To those who know a little bit about newspapers and their circulations it is simply an occasion for merriment. Had the Journal claimed 50,000 circulation it would have been able... to increase its business on that basis, but it became so accustomed to lying that it took the bit in its mouth and has absolutely run away with itself.[19]

The losses led to tension with the Scripps, who ordered economy measures in an attempt to stem the losses. At one point in 1897 a rumor was circulating that James Scripps had removed the Booths and taken direct charge of the failing property. Two years later claimed circulation had slumped to 85,000 and the *Journal*'s directors ordered strict economy measures to hold operating expenses below the anticipated $311,000 in income. James Scripps bought $100,000 in stock in 1900 to help retire the paper's debt and took George Booth's place as company president.[20]

It briefly appeared that the economy measures might enable the paper to begin paying down its debts, but with Hearst's entry into the already-crowded Chicago newspaper market the deficits began to mount once again. Efforts to build circulation by selling clubbed subscriptions with downstate papers and magazines were only marginally successful, and the paper got dragged into expensive and bloody circulation wars. In 1900, the *Journal* and *Daily News* traded complaints about the sluggers each was using to drive newsboys carrying competing papers off the street. (Violence periodically flared up particularly in the highly competitive afternoon market as publishers sought to encourage, and where persuasion was not enough to compel, newsboys to increase their orders and to give their newspapers preferential treatment. Thus, on September 4, 1911, a *Journal* circulation man attacked newsboy Mike Marengo after he refused to agree to an increased order of *Journals* or to pay for unordered copies. A month later newsboy Albert Muskovitch was attacked by a *Journal* driver when he refused to increase his draw from 3 copies daily to 20. All the major dailies were involved in the violence that flared up periodically from 1900 through the mid-1920s.)[21]

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[19] Charles Faye to Victor Lawson, July 23 1897, Victor Lawson Papers - Incoming Series. On Feb. 1 1898, Faye reported that the *Journal* was selling to newsboys at 25 cents per 100 copies, half the going rate.

[20] Charles Faye to Victor Lawson, Nov. 8 1897, Victor Lawson Papers - Incoming Series; Chicago Journal Board of Directors Minutes, Jan. 18 1900, Richard Finnegan Papers, Box 10 folder 2; Evening Press Minutes, Jan. 18 1900.

[21] Ferdinand Lundberg, *Imperial Hearst: A Social Biography*, New York: Equinox Cooperative Press, 1936, p. 149. The *Daily Calumet* announced that it could be bought in combination with the *Journal* in its March 8, 1902 issue. Booth's heavy losses on the *Journal* are discussed by Arthur Pound in *The Only Thing Worth Finding: The Life and Legacy of George Gough Booth*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1969. For the circulation wars see: Jon Bekken, "Crumbs From the Publishers' Golden Tables: The Plight of the Chicago Newsboy," American Journalism Historians Association, 1995; "Journal Brute Slugs Crippled Newspaper Boy," *Chicago Daily Socialist*, Sept. 5 1911, p. 3; "Journal Driver Brutally Slugs A Newsdealer," *Chicago Daily Socialist*, Nov. 10 1911, p. 1.

In 1904 James Scripps and the Booth brothers (Wilson had been bought out a few years earlier, and Scripps had become the dominant partner) sold the paper to former *Chicago American* business manager John Eastman after losing nearly a million dollars over a decade of publishing. This can hardly be attributed to profligate spending, however, even if Scripps did complain that George Booth was not keeping a tight enough reign on expenses. Both Scripps and Booth were experienced publishers accustomed to producing low-cost evening newspapers in competitive markets (though markets where the competition was rarely as heated as in Chicago). Under their direction the *Journal* was an active participant in the Daily Newspaper Publishers Association's efforts to constrain competition and control costs under both Booth-Scripps and Eastman control, continuing to negotiate common release times and other restrictions on competition until the end. In 1926, for example, the *Journal* signed onto an agreement with the *Herald-Examiner, American, News* and *Tribune* agreeing that no evening paper would release an edition before 10:15 a.m. (9:30 on Saturdays) or after 6 p.m. (morning papers agreed not to publish before 9 in the evening (7 p.m. on Saturdays). The publishers also agreed to give each other at least 30 minutes notice before releasing any extras.[22]

John Eastman attempted to make the *Journal* profitable by squeezing every dollar. In 1908, Eastman reported that he had settled a debt to the General Paper Company for 45 cents on the dollar, raised advertising rates, and cut newsboys' margins by 20 percent (from 50% to 40% of the cover price) while eliminating their right to return unsold papers. Even so, the paper lost $46,000 on the fiscal year, but would have had a "very handsome net profit" were it not for slowed advertising sales and higher paper costs. This marked the fourth year of declining losses under Eastman's ownership (the paper lost $101,755.75 in Eastman's first year and $225,000 over the four years), and it would turn a modest

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[22] Bloor Schleppy to Richard Finnegan, April 7 1926, Richard Finnegan Papers, Box 4 folder 5; Richard Kaplan, "The Economics of Popular Journalism in the Gilded Age: The Detroit *Evening News* in 1873 and 1888," *Journalism History* 21, Summer 1995, p. 77 (note 44); Pound, *op cit.*, pp. 169-74 (Pound reports that the *Journal* was sold March 31st 1904 to one Charles Palmer for $265,000; if so this was merely part of the transfer of control to Eastman, who took charge of the paper a few days later); Journal Directors Minutes, April 1-2, 1904; Morris Kenton, "Yellow Journalism and our Foreign-Born Population," Columbia University MA Thesis, 1915, p. 14. The Lawson Papers contain extensive correspondence with *Journal* representatives as part of the Newspaper Publishers Association's periodic efforts to reign in the combatants. See, e.g., Victor Lawson to W.H. Turner, March 29 1900; Lawson to S.S. Carvalho, Oct. 18 1912 and Dec. 3 1912; Victor Lawson Papers, Newberry Library. For *Journal* involvement in the Newspaper Publishers Association see, e.g., Victor Lawson to W.H. Turner, March 12 1890 [draft agreement on release times]; W. Werner to John Wilson, March 25 1891 [agreement on baseball extras]; Agreement between *Chicago Evening Post, Journal, Dispatch* and *Daily News*, July 27 1898; Victor Lawson Papers. Eastman also encouraged the Association to take action against the Hearst organization. A.G. Beaunisne to Victor Lawson, Nov. 14 1906; John Eastman to H.L. Sayler, Dec. 13 1907; Victor Lawson Papers, City Press Association of Chicago folder 2.

$6,455.58 profit the next year (on gross revenues of $617,571.89). However, the *Journal* remained profitable (and then only marginally so) only for three years before the 1912-13 newspaper strike threw it back into the red (see Table One). The *Journal* returned to profitability in 1917 (in part by slashing editorial columns under the guise of compliance with wartime newsprint restrictions), but was losing money again by 1921. All told, Eastman lost approximately $300,000 (plus the purchase price) in his 21 years publishing the *Journal*.[23]

Eastman's paper devoted substantial space to crime and other sensational news, continuing the paper's gradual reorientation to a more popular audience. But Eastman also continued devoting substantial space to economic news; in 1912 the *Journal* ran a higher proportion of economic news than any other Chicago general circulation evening paper. And the paper drifted steadily closer to the Democratic Party, becoming a de facto partisan organ by the 1920s. The *Journal* published a special "Dever edition" to support the Democrats' 1923 mayoral ticket, which was distributed by ward committeemen throughout the city; three years later a party office holder wrote editor Richard Finnegan to express his "congratulations and appreciation of the very splendid work that the Journal did in the past campaign in the interest of the Democratic ticket." "If every democrat in Chicago would, like yourself, read The Journal, we would be satisfied," Finnegan replied. The *Journal* backed the moderate wing of the party, favoring smaller government and opposing efforts for public ownership of utilities and local transportation systems. (As the *Times*, the paper went on to become the only English-language general circulation paper to support Roosevelt's election in 1932.)[24]

The paper ran sixth (of six) general circulation English-language dailies in advertising pages in the mid-1920s, even though it claimed a circulation more than twice that of the fifth-place *Evening Post*. The *Journal* did bring in far more advertising revenue than the *Post*, but less than a fifth as much as the fourth-place *Herald & Examiner* (Hearst's morning paper).[25] The *Journal* bent over backwards to placate advertisers. When the Cooney Brothers movie theaters complained about a 3-inch article on a lawsuit accusing the chain of defrauding the Famous Players circuit by under-reporting admissions, the *Journal*'s advertising manager warned that the paper would lose their advertising if it didn't "square things" with Cooney. A year later, he asked Managing Editor Richard Finnegan to ensure that a bowling alley that refused to advertise be excluded from the *Journal*'s news columns. (Finnegan got his start as a copy boy on the *Chronicle,* later working as a reporter on space rates before moving briefly to the *Inter-Ocean* in 1904 and, later that year, to the *Journal.* He became city editor in 1914, and managing editor in 1916. He was one of three top staffers who inherited the paper from Eastman in 1925, becoming co-editor of the *Journal* and then editor of the *Times* and *Sun-Times* until 1950 when he retired.)[26]

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[23] Journal Directors Minutes, March 14, 1908; Statement of Earnings and Expenses for Year Ending March 31, 1908 (henceforth Earnings Statement), Earning Statement 1905, Earnings Statement 1909. Chicago Daily Journal collection, Box 6, Chicago Historical Society. Journal Directors Minutes, May 14 and Sept. 12 1908, Richard Finnegan Papers, Box 10 folder 2. For a summary of financial results from 1905 through 1927 see Table One, appended.

[24] Finnegan to George Brennan, March 27 1923, Finnegan Papers, Box 1 folder 2; Michael McKinley to Finnegan, Nov. 3 1926; Finnegan to McKinley, Nov. 4 1926; Richard Finnegan Papers, Box 5 folder 7.

[25] "Estimated Income from Local and National Advertising Based on Minimum Rates, 1923 to 1928," Chicago Typographical Union #16 Papers, Box 14 folder 7, Chicago Historical Society; Bloor Schleppey, Pages and Columns of Reading Matter - Daily Editions, July 19 1926, Aug. 30 1926, Sept. 27 1926. Richard J. Finnegan Papers, Box 14 folder 9.

Eastman was suspected by his fellow publishers of also inflating his circulation figures to lure advertisers in. In 1914 Eastman protested a *Daily News* table of city circulation based on a survey of news dealers, contending that it dramatically under-reported *Journal* circulation. *Daily News* publisher Victor Lawson agreed to add a footnote acknowledging the *Journal*'s independent carrier force, but declined an offer to inspect the *Journal*'s circulation records to correct his figures. But when Lawson revisited the issue in 1921, asking for circulation figures for a new *News* table, Eastman declined to cooperate.[27]

However, no amount of fudging could conceal the fact that the *Journal* was a distant third in evening circulation, a position that could be (and was) sustained in the 19th century when newspapers were modest organizations primarily supported by their readers. But with the switch to a mass-circulation penny paper, it was no longer possible to cover costs from circulation revenue. Table One (appended) demonstrates that the *Journal* drew about twice as much revenue from its advertising as from its readers throughout Eastman's tenure as publisher. In 1923 -- the *Journal*'s most profitable year aside from the abnormal conditions of the World War I-era -- the paper brought in $997,329.77 in

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This was a weekly tabulation of editorial and advertising pages produced by the secretary of the Chicago Local of the American Newspaper Publishers Association, the Chicago Newspaper Trust.

[26] W. Frank Dunn to Richard J. Finnegan, Feb. 1 1926, Finnegan Papers box 4 folder 2 [no reply is on file]; Dunn to Finnegan, March 2 1927, Finnegan Papers, Box 6 folder 4 (On April 21, Dunn asked Finnegan to make space for a picture of a Journal advertiser, Box 6 folder 7); "Richard J. Finnegan Dies; Newspaperman 50 Years," *Chicago Sun-Times*, May 7 1955, pp. 1, 16.

[27] Lawson to Eastman, March 14 1914; Lawson to Eastman, Dec. 29 1921; Victor Lawson Papers. The *Journal*'s ledgers for 1914 show subscriptions accounting for $49,692.34 of the paper's total circulation revenue of $196,275.96.

advertising, and $449,907.53 in circulation (only $36,839.65 of which was from subscriptions; despite operating its own home delivery system the *Journal* was always heavily dependent upon single copy sales and bulk sales to carriers and dealers). Its advertising was about 75 percent local display (the *Journal* carried little classified advertising; that business was dominated by the *Tribune* and the *Daily News*).[28]

The journalists who inherited the *Journal* published it for three years (and actually turned a small profit doing so) before selling it to former *Chicago Tribune* business manager S.E. Thomason (with *Richmond (Virginia) News* publisher John Stewart Bryan and financing from International Paper Co.) on May 31, 1928. Thomason was a lawyer who moved from representing the *Tribune* in court to serving as its business manager and later general manager, before resigning to purchase (with Bryan) the Tampa (Fla.) *Tribune* and the Greensboro (N.C.) *Record.* Thomason increased the space devoted to features and human interest stories in the *Journal,* naming Richard Finnegan (who had long had charge of features) to the editor's chair. As editor Finnegan paid particular attention to securing a diverse array of feature articles, a particularly challenging task given that several of his competitors could pay much higher rates and had more space to accommodate the most popular features. (In 1925 the *Journal* published fewer than half as many pages as its leading competitors, the *Daily News* and the *American* ; while only about a third of its pages went to advertising, the *Journal* generally published fewer columns of copy than any other general circulation paper in the Chicago market.) Finnegan responded, in part, by developing new features. "We do not pay on a John D. Rockefeller scale of remuneration," he warned one prospective contributor (an astronomer at the Yerkes Observatory) in 1924. He was seeking articles of three to five hundred words, paying 1.5 cents a word, and demanding concision: Remember, "the story of the creation was told in six hundred words."[29]

But efforts to develop features and other promotions to build circulation were not without their own political consequences. Among the promotional efforts the *Journal* undertook was a series of national marble championships organized by the Scripps League. When three African-American boys were among the 100 boys qualifying for the semi-finals, the League's horrified M.F. Bourjaily wrote Finnegan: "Can you imagine the mother of a champ from Alabama or Tennessee chumming around with the mammy of a colored champ from Chi? ... I still hope you will eliminate your colored entries in the finals, but if not, you will just have to chloroform them." No response is on file, but the *Journal* continued to participate in the tournaments in later years.[30]

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[28] Statement of Earnings and Expenses for Year Ending 12/31/1923. Chicago Daily Journal Collection, Box 6, Chicago Historical Society.

[29] Finnegan to Edwin Frost, Oct. 4 1924, Finnegan Papers, Box 1 folder 14; Chicago Times Prospectus, 1939, pp. 5-6, Finnegan Papers, Box 14 folder 3; Mary Ann Weston, "Chicago's Tabloid Times: Jazz Journalism in the Windy City," American Journalism Historians Association, 1989, p. 2. See Table Five for data on advertising and news columns taken from reports compiled by the Newspaper Publishers Association beginning in the 1920s.

The features were not sufficient to turn around a newspaper embarrassed by a Federal Trade Commission investigation into International Paper's anti-competitive practices and the *Journal*'s stodgy reputation. The *Journal*'s traditional readers were uncomfortable with the changes, while the new readers the paper was after saw no reason to pick it up. The result was further erosion of the paper's base of conservative readers and advertisers. By Sept. 30, 1928, average circulation had slipped to 70,332. When an effort to buy the *Evening Post* and merge it into the *Journal* failed Thomason began plans to transform the *Journal* into Chicago's first tabloid, the *Daily IllustratedTimes*.[31]

The *Journal*'s sale was announced August 2, 1929, in a front-page announcement which suggested that the *Daily News* would continue to issue the *Journal* as a separate newspaper. By August 17th, entire pages were identical between the two titles, and the pressmen sometimes forgot to remove the *Daily News* slug from inside pages. The *Journal*'s long history came to an end with the August 21 issue, which added the *Daily Commercial Chronicle* to the nameplate and announced that it would be the final issue of the *Journal* "in this form." (Thomason issued the *Chronicle* from August 22 through Sept. 2nd to preserve the franchises, losing $35,239.88 in its two weeks.)[32]

On September 3, 1929, the Journal Company launched the *Daily Illustrated Times*, using the *Journal's* franchises, press, and much of its staff. While the photo-heavy tabloid *Times* was in many ways dramatically different from the paper it replaced, in at least one respect it continued the illustrious tradition of its forebearer. A Prospectus issued in 1936 reported that between June 1, 1928 and Nov. 30, 1934, the *Journal* and the *Times* had run a combined operating deficit of $3.9 million; many employees had taken part of their wages in stock in order to help keep the *Times* from going under.[33]

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[30] April 16 1923, Finnegan papers, unnumbered box folder "Items from the RJF papers." Editor Richard Finnegan's papers are heavily dominated by correspondence with feature syndicates; when the paper was reorganized as the Times it organized its own syndicate. But they also include correspondence with Democratic National Committee chair Clem Shaver and other party officials on the local political situation. The Democrats were looking for an alternative to the Hearst papers (the rest of the English-language press was solidly Republican); in 1924 Hearst offered to have his papers support the Davis presidential ticket if he was promised a cabinet post but was turned down. Typescript report, Sept. 20, 1924. Richard J. Finnegan papers, unnumbered box, folder: "Correspondence 1916-1925."

[31] Alfred Crowell, "History of the Chicago Daily Times," M.A. Thesis, Northwestern University, 1940, pp. 1-13; Chicago Daily Journal, "Publisher's Statement of Circulation (ABC)," 1928, Finnegan Papers box 8, folder 9.

[32] Prospectus, Chicago Times Company, Dec. 5 1936, p. 12;

And while the *Times* quickly built a circulation far larger than it enjoyed in its earlier incarnation, the new readers did not necessarily mean prosperity. The *Times* ran up enormous deficits in the Depression years of the 1930s, and was hardly prosperous when it was bought by Marshall Field in 1947 -- less for its own merits than for presses on which to print his *Chicago Sun*. In 1950, two years after Field had absorbed the *Times* into his morning *Sun* to form the *Chicago Sun-Times*, executives were still struggling to make the paper pay. When they eliminated its afternoon editions they welcomed the reduced expenditures. "Now, if we retain both circulation and advertising volume, we should quickly become a money-making institution."[34]

They were indeed able to do so, with the help of Field's millions. The *Journal*'s publishers, however, never had the capital to buy out their competitors or to sustain the millions in losses Field endured. More importantly, they had neither the vision nor the means to successfully navigate the transition from the personalized, partisan journalism of the mid-1880s to the modern corporate enterprises that came to dominate newspaper publishing in the early decades of this century.

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[33] Prospectus, Chicago Times, Inc., Dec. 30, 1939, pp. 26-27. Richard J. Finnegan Papers, Box 14, folder 3. In 1939, International Paper was the largest single share-holder, and also held $3 million in debentures.

[34] Milburn Akers to Bud Fitzpatrick, April 22 1950, Chicago Times Papers, Box 63J folder Fitzpatrick, JR; Roy Topper, "Tell It To Topper," *Chicago Herald-American*, August 11 1947, p. 16 [several *Times* staffers received hundreds of thousands of dollars in sale]; Richard J. Finnegan, Statement to Stockholders, July 23 1947, Chicago Times Papers, Box 58, folder Official Carrier Correspondence, Newberry Library. The *Sun* and *Times* were merged during the Typographical strike of 1947-1949.

TABLE ONE

CHICAGO JOURNAL FINANCIAL SUMMARIES, 1905-1927

Fiscal Year*	1905	1906	1907	1908	1909	1910	1911	1912
Profit/Loss	-101,755.75	-60,620.38	-72,007.30	-46,046.78	**6,455.58**	**27,232.86**	**14,207.63**	-31,190.02
Circulation	86,310.18	97,093.26	116,750.77	132,004.36	162,489.16	200,133.31	191,253.72	193,392.31
Advertising	258,792.75	323,196.23	394,494.16	391,270.03	438,130.94	484,429.25	519,603.80	504,954.86
Expenses	451,069.77	491,843.13	599,973.65	576,480.40	611,116.31	678,674.57	715,748.09	742,665.63
Editorial	105,542.02	110,226.36	111,738.74	106,828.93	110,605.22	114,258.68	114,557.32	117,378.77

	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917	1918	1919
Profit/Loss	-62,328.41	-94,927.39	-90,520.31	-51,953.01	**35,901.29**	**53,061.70**	**53,119.97**
Circulation	179,140.67	196,275.96	211,776.03	205,511.12	213,416.91	325,042.52	341,549.68
Advertising	515,589.38	520,396.30	497,379.12	520,026.13	611,147.17	560,070.95	630,134.46
Expenses	769,712.40	818,207.39	804,324.85	780,523.72	797,742.20	836,539.32	922,606.50
Editorial	118,180.81	131,616.30	124,265.18	124,894.41	127,524.21	133,426.23	137,235.40

	1920	1921	Ap-D '21	1923*	1924	1925	1926	1927
Profit/Loss	**125,297.24**	-28,120.60	-57,798.68	**87,062.96**	-16,974.48	**5,732.76**	**64,727.16**	-309.81
Circulation	340,743.33	417,242.97	309,063.69	449,907.53	473,896.43	484,524.84	502,579.50	474,365.48
Advertising	929,039.74	1,010,449.58	757,815.95	997,329.77	985,827.21	946,929.76	1,044,296.93	957,375.92
Expenses	1,170,767.42	1,461,590.49	1,129,240.00	1,484,233.59	1,483,868.75	1,571,816.66	1,611,153.39	1,601,477.74
Editorial	167,118.56	201,826.14	----	255,864.45	-----	264,048.74	307,140.90	302,821.85

Cumulative Loss for Period 1905 - 1927: $199,745.68 (includes 1922 operating profit)

Notes: Fiscal Year runs through March 31 of the year designated through 1921; from 1922 (for which only monthly figures – which do not include non-operating expenses – are available, in 1922 the *Journal* earned an operating profit of $42,008.09 [calculated from monthly ledgers, which do not always yield results consistent with the annual reports]) on, records were kept on a calendar year basis. Profit/Loss figure includes non-operating expenses. Profits are in bold type.

Source: Daily Journal Collection, Box 6, Chicago Historical Society. The collection includes monthly and annual financial statements, billing records and other financial records.

TABLE TWO

SELECTED CHICAGO JOURNAL MONTHLY STATEMENTS: 1905-1927

	June 1911	Aug 1911	Oct 1911	Nov 1911	Dec 1911	Feb 1912	April 1912
Profit/Loss	-2,261.97	-15,461.98	-627.68	5,276.91	9,507.78	-1,896.01	6,057.57
Circulation	14,033.68	14,580.98	15,921.18	14,742.66	18,166.06	17,594.91	19,023.39
Advertising	46,096.03	28,816.23	46,982.65	49,397.59	51,609.25	40,490.67	54,522.11
Expenses	62,857.43	60,379.92	64,117.36	60,291.82	61,812.95	61,112.65	67,610.07

	Jan 1920	Feb 1920	March 1920	April 1920	May 1920	June 1920	July 1920	Aug 1920
Profit/Loss	12,209.84	6,139.07	19,272.65	10,832.82	12,343.84	-8,384.86	-30,492.28	-29,497.87
Circulation	32,033.11	28,969.26	32,214.29	31,190.11	28,779.56	29,022.73	28,490.92	28,229.68
Advertising	84,148.02	64,221.09	86,401.92	86,401.92	82,370.73	83,406.70	67,313.64	64,738.43
Expenses	104,437.20	87,509.85	107,227.40	108,762.74	99,301.38	121,251.70	126,719.21	122,862.64

	Sept 1920	Oct 1920	Nov 1920	Dec 1920
Profit/Loss	-7,629.13	4,386.78	16,453.15	24,095.61
Circulation	31,510.16	40,975.91	38,843.59	39,582.07
Advertising	92,155.37	92,131.52	95,321.83	123,110.70
Expenses	131,804.29	129,179.95	118,187.22	139,180.03

	Jan 1922	Feb 1922	March 1922	April 1922	May 1922	June 1922	July 1922	Aug 1922
Profit/Loss	3,409.97	1,319.97	4,241.24	4,829.13	-5,806.31	2,763.28	-16,763.90	-14,262.85
Circulation	36,837.01	33,405.06	33,198.61	37,981.14	32,236.09	35,075.00	30,621.31	32,187.84
Advertising	80,927.01	66,822.61	76,943.73	80,829.31	79,328.94	71,207.94	59,336.63	60,861.66
Expenses	114,960.24	99,522.69	115,161.90	105,899.16	112,739.37	109,358.52	107,146.05	108,167.40

	Sept 1922	Oct 1922	Nov 1922	Dec 1922		April 1927	March 1928	April 1928
Profit/Loss	5,414.54	17,579.56	25,848.88	13,434.58		-7,537.60	-4,003.79	-6,809.52
Circulation	33,331.52	36,169.86	36,917.24	35,960.00		45,909.03	38,575.55	37,443.67
Advertising	81,038.33	91,985.03	95,224.11	95,224.11		77,191.14	84,547.07	73,554.72
Expenses	109,452.17	111,115.63	110,696.20	118,285.67		131,145.34	127,961.89	126,891.62

Notes: These accounts include operating income and expenses only. Costs of capital and other non-operating expenses are included in the annual financial ledgers, but not in the monthly statements. (The originals contain detailed break-downs of operating expenses.)

Source: Daily Journal Collection, Box 6, Chicago Historical Society.

TABLE THREE

CHICAGO TIMES FINANCIAL SUMMARIES: 1931, 1934, 1937

	Jan 1931	Feb 1931	March 1931	April 1931	May 1931	June 1931	July 1931	Aug 1931
Profit/Loss	-20,258.88	-20,845.66	-8,833.74	-17,009.97	-21,018.62	-25,247.26	-39,818.87	-38,466.96
Circulation	60,577.17	62,653.71	69,363.94	66,678.14	62,779.79	63,151.97	59,569.08	61,373.52
Advertising	63,149.86	59,874.77	376,903.04	83,250.29	73,868.26	69,267.43	58,015.02	53,758.35
Expenses	151,811.91	149,141.31	160,656.30	170,363.84	163,603.01	162,402.32	158,678.68	154,386.41
Net Paid Circ:	183,012	203,720	205,046	198,486	193,795	187,470	176,198	180,728

	Sept 1931	Oct 1931	Nov 1931	Dec 1931	Jan 1934	Feb 1934	March 1934	April 1934
Profit/Loss	-34,675.27	**2,666.69**	**2,835.56**	-10,943.92	-38,288.69	-39,129.66	-30,188.77	-34,369.98
Circulation	62,537.67	69,807.12	62,125.55	62,408.58	71,257.29	68,459.19	75,608.14	80,282.04
Advertising	55,573.51	86,282.94	79,145.12	73,108.35	44,608.10	39,514.67	50,407.54	57,033.36
Expenses	155,753.56	158,072.73	148,140.33	153,255.17	156,402.24	149,362.62	159,889.45	175,821.30
Net Paid Circ:	191,352	193,669	198,937	184,555	170,137	175,807	181,500	187,061

	May 1934	June 1934	July 1934	Aug 1934	Sept 1934	Oct 1934	Nov 1934	Dec 1934
Profit/Loss	-35,279.77	-39,112.09	-51,258.86	-36,464.24	-33,740.97	-23,519.71	-31,456.83	-36,708.86
Circulation	76,426.55	70,011.97	78,121.63	81,628.60	79,472.87	84,120.77	80,060.97	83,951.17
Advertising	62,650.97	56,451.11	44,442.28	47,062.73	52,063.01	64,516.68	68,214.77	58,773.97
Expenses	179,333.69	168,977.62	174,352.75	167,463.21	166,028.24	173,760.86	177,375.47	178,936.68
Net Paid Circ:	176,445	174,214	180,672	192,193	190,285	192,374	194,708	191,769

	Jan 1937	Feb 1937	March 1937	April 1937	May 1937	June 1937	July 1937	Aug 1937
Profit/Loss	-26,955.21	-28,842.05	-16,091.86	5,573.80	-18,149.40	-16,954.23	-46,089.87	-35,867.29
Circulation	141,543.75	126,116.78	156,752.30	158,432.28	162,816.12	163,010.64	152,259.88	168,018.04
Advertising	104,125.57	119,585.07	148,244.86	187,267.85	164,163.46	166,406.11	122,226.14	130,157.85
Expenses	269,818.54	272,686.15	312,807.89	329,998.40	330,551.72	334,022.98	307,312.55	321,068.64
Net Paid Circ:	340,770	340,163	352,231	349,160	355,669	367,797	355,882	344,220

	Sept 1937	Oct 1937	Nov 1937	Dec 1937
Profit/Loss	-11,927.78	**25,556.66**	-4,455.97	-1,811.81
Circulation	157,823.01	170,523.14	150,879.40	165,082.17
Advertising	165,613.47	214,306.01	179,552.29	180,230.62
Expenses	339,930.05	364,671.49	350,129.15	351,226.66
Net Paid Circ:	380,042	360,032	360,633	349,632

Notes: Profits in bold type.
Profit/Loss includes non-operating expenses.
For 1934 and 1937, circulation is daily only
(Sunday edition inaugurated in 1932 is excluded).

Source: Richard J. Finnegan Papers, Boxes 11-12, Chicago Historical Society.

TABLE FOUR

CHICAGO TIMES FINANCIAL SUMMARIES

	1931	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938
Advertising Income	832,296.94	539,396.32	651,365.04	1,130,714.80	1,418,662.44	2,017,825.36	2,143,720.55
Circulation Income	763,026.24	783,883.07	931,944.27	1,194,206.22	1,485,487.12	1,902,811.30	1,924,833.82
Operating Expenses	1,886,265.37	1,773,627.98	2,040,884.95	2,467,781.75	3,020,791.58	3,946,698.50	4,113,826.59
Interest	----	108,847.83	142,147.98	185,297.43	189,698.00	157,053.38	158,272.26
Profit/Loss	-237,288.02	-389,041.82	-447,012.92	-177,294.58	-151,880.09	**33,238.48**	-13,374.56
Net Paid Circ:	184,555	158,534	192,503	249,420	283,171	355,849	348,842

	1939*	1940
Advertising Income	2,209,309.50	2,584,336.45
Circulation Income	1,785,330.07	2,092,813.50
Operating Expenses	3,997,061.78	4,734,581.42
Interest	143,279.23	----
Profit/Loss	**27,858.54**	-22,258.31
Net Paid Circ:	----	411,075

Note: Profits shown in bold print; Circulation figures are daily only (excluding Sundays). 1939 is first 11 months.

Source: Times Publishing Corporation Prospectus, 1936, pp. 2, 15, 25; Chicago Times Company Prospectus, 1939, pp. 30-31, 39; in Richard Finnegan Papers, Box 14 folder 3; [for 1931 and 1940] Chicago Times Estimated Daily Profit & Loss Statements (calculated from month-end totals), Finnegan Papers, Box 11 folders 1-3, Box 13 folders 2-4; Chicago Historical Society.

TABLE FIVE
READING AND ADVERTISING MATTER

	April 13-24 1925		Aug. 31-Sept. 12 1925		Oct. 12-17 1925			Nov. 16-21 1925		
	Avg. Pages	News Col.	Avg Pages	News Col.	Avg Pages	% Ads	News Col.*	Avg Pages	% Ads	News Col.*
Tribune	38	92.3	36.7	95.2	43	64.2	585.4	39.7	63.2	570.9
Herald-Examiner	25.2	112	24.8	114.7	30	35.4	738.1	28.3	32.3	729.5
Journal of Commerce			11.9	70.7	13	29.7	421.9	12.7	28.9	432.7
Daily Newa	47.7	130.9	40.7	120.6	48.7	62.1	759.3	47.2	60.8	825.1
American	39	135.6	36	140	43.3	53.5	807.3	42.3	54.6	813.2
Journal	20	86.4	19.8	99.3	21.3	35.4	575.8	21.5	38.7	554.3
Post	21.7	109.1	20	110.4	23.7	40.7	659	23	38.3	626.2

	June 7-19 1926			July 5-17 1926			Aug. 16-28 1926			Sept. 13-25 1926		
	Avg Pages	% Ads	News Col.*	Avg Pages	% Ads	News Col.	Avg Pages	% Ads	News Col.	Avg Pages	% Ads	News Col.
Tribune	42.2	62.6	585.33	36.8	57.4	95	35.2	54.5	94.8	45	62	97.3
Herald-Examiner	29.5	32.5	767.2	26.3	30.9	114.3	24.3	26.3	112.26	27.2	33.1	114.9
Journal of Commerce	13.7	31.8	433.4	14	25.4	77.7	12.5	23	74	14	28.4	79.4
Daily Newa	49	58	839.4	42.3	52.1	133.5	39.3	50.7	131.9	50.3	58.7	138.1
American	39.5	47.8	838.2	33.7	48.4	122.8	33.2	42	126.7	40.7	50.1	135.1
Journal	21	34.6	656.3	19.5	29	109.7	20	24	111.1	20	28.1	112
Post	25.3	37.9	731.8	21.7	33.9	111.4	20.3	31.1	109.4	22.2	33.6	112

	Jan. 3-15 1927		
	Avg Pages	% Ads	News Col.*
Tribune	37.2	57.7	585.14
Herald-Examiner	30.2	26.6	690.8
Journal of Commerce	15.5	23.1	466
Daily Newa	42.7	53.9	814.1
American	35.5	48.8	755
Journal	19.6	25.3	684.3
Post	21.2	33.8	677.5

Notes: *Total news columns for period;
News Columns without asterisks represent daily averages
for period designated.

Source: AMC, "Pages & Columns of Reading Matter -- Daily Editions," Richard J. Finnegan Papers, Box 14 folders 8-9, Chicago Historical Society. Numbers have been rounded to one decimal place.

Converting the Popular to Politics:
The American Feminist Magazine as Forum for Transformation

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ABSTRACT

Converting the Popular to Politics: The American Feminist Magazine as Forum for Transformation

The first American feminist magazines, a group of six major players, emerged amidst the so-called "feminine fifties,' when the popularity of the sentimental-domestic novel was peaking and commercial ladies' magazines were likewise attaining substantial public notice. The best-selling women's magazines of the era boasted circulations of 40,000 by 1850, which grew to over 150,000 through the antebellum period. The first feminist magazines were born in what might be called the Decade of the Literary Lady On the Move.

At its height in 1855, *The Lily* (1849-58), the longest-lived and most renowned feminist magazine of the first generation, achieved circulation of about 6,000--roughly half the average circulation of all women's monthlies at mid-century, and nearly equal to the average circulation of all monthly magazines at this time. Although *The Lily* survived mostly by subscription fees instead of advertising, much of its significance to women did not lie in its numbers, but in its dynamic operations on gender discourse.

The Lily hosted repeated confrontations with the popular gender discourse of the day--domestic discourse, the sentimental-domestic genre, and with the corresponding vision of social organization, "the woman's sphere"--variously reworking the popular media image of woman and her place in the world. Encouraging the strategic deployment of domesticity, collective assaults on its expectations and requirements, oppositional decoding of popular stories, and creating recoding of popular "women's genres," the magazine facilitated challenges to the boundaries of the dominant discourse, pushing it into new realms of female empowerment.

Using the example of *The Lily*, this paper discusses how the magazine's formal qualities and discursive dynamics worked to convert popular "feminine" discourse to feminist politics, presenting some specific strategies of that interplay of gender and genre.

Converting the Popular to Politics: The American Feminist Magazine As Forum for Transformation

> "It is woman's womanhood, her instinctive femininity, her highest morality that society now needs to counteract the excess of masculinity that is everywhere to be found in our unjust and unequal laws."
>
> --*The Lily*, December 1856

This contribution captures a critical moment in the evolution of feminist thinking in the nineteenth century, a moment made possible by the magazine, *The Lily* (1849-58), itself. The contributor uses domesticity, the dominant gender discourse of her day, to push past it into a new realm. She advances domesticity's signature claim of Woman's instinctive reformist ethics, while underscoring the achievement of justice as gendered: "femininity" is seen as the necessary corrective to male dominance of the public, law-making domain.

This approach to social reform reads like textbook domestic discourse but for its direct object: here, in 1856, "womanhood" explicitly targets the law. The contributor's language epitomizes while it perpetuates a developmental dialogue between the popular idea of "femininity" and early American feminism. The two conflicting gender discourses--"feminine" and feminist--cooperate rather than compete. They form a sequence of assertions that both propels and sustains the writer's claim.

Although a few scholars have written about the first generation of American women's rights periodicals, a group of six major magazines, they have generally discussed women--not gender--in relation to early activism; and, they have seen the magazines largely as vehicles for political self-expression and political opposition to patriarchal culture and attitudes. They have not discussed the relationship of magazine format to content and its effects, or the strategic interplay of early feminist women and "feminine" gender discourse enabled by these magazines.[1] This essay on *The Lily: Devoted to the Interests of Women* will address such dynamics of gender and genre.[2]

The first American feminist magazines emerged amidst the so-called "feminine fifties," when the popularity of the sentimental-domestic novel was peaking and commercial ladies' magazines were likewise attaining substantial public notice. The best-selling women's magazines of era--including *Godey's Lady's Book* (1830-98) published Louis Godey; *The Peterson Magazine* (1842-98) published by C. J. Peterson; *Arthur's (Home) Magazine* (1852-98) published by popular novelist T. S. Arthur--boasted circulations of 40,000 by 1850, and grew to over 150,000 through the antebellum period.[3] Although these popular magazines were published by men, a growing breed of women visibly and vocally ran the editorial side.[4] The feminist magazine was born in what might be called the Decade of the Literary Lady On the Move.

At its height in 1855, *The Lily*, the longest-lived and most-renowned of its generation, achieved circulation of about 6,000 subscribers nation-wide--half the circulation of 12,000 averaged by all women's monthlies at mid-century, and nearly equal to the average circulation of all American monthly magazines at the time.[5] Although *The Lily* survived mostly by subscription fees instead of advertising,[6] much of its significance to women did not lie in its circulation numbers anyway, but in its dynamic operations on gender discourse.

The Lily hosted repeated confrontations with the popular gender discourse of the day--domestic discourse, the sentimental-domestic genre, and with the corresponding vision of social organization, "the woman's sphere"--variously reworking the popular media image of woman. Encouraging the strategic deployment of domesticity, collective assaults on its expectations and requirements, oppositional decoding of popular stories, and creative recoding of popular "women's genres," the magazine facilitated challenges to the boundaries of the dominant discourse, pushing it into new realms of female empowerment.

Discursive Deployments: Domesticity and its Uses in *The Lily*

Sentimental-domestic discourse was the authorized language for women's use, and so *Lily* contributors consistently used it--but in a variety of strategic ways. One dominant attraction to the discourse was its emotional appeal, which cried out for reader response. One *Lily* contributor, Mary C. Vaughan, later the editor of the *Woman's Temperance Paper* (1854-6),[7] writes an exemplary admixture of sentimentality and political strategy in "Maternal Influence," published in February, 1851, issue.

Vaughan opens with the central, rhetorical question of sentimental-domesticity: "a mother's influence--who can estimate its strength or its power?" she queries. Her answer is poetic and political: "None can limit its extent, for whether for good or evil, it shall be felt through the ceaseless ages of eternity," she begins. In syntactically dizzying sentimental style, Vaughan expounds that "none may know in this life of the souls encouraged by maternal solicitude to heavenward aspirations; fitted by maternal prayers and examples, when death has dissolved the ties that bound them to earthly influences, to plume their flight beyond the stars, and join evermore in the grand employments of the better world..." In the same sentence, conjoined merely by the conjunction "and," Vaughan's opening paragraph then plummets downward, warning: "...and the wailings of the lost through all their long eternity of woe, will add a deeper torment to the faithless mother's doom." The pain, of course, begins long before eternity. "This bitter punishment commences even in this life," she admonishes, "where there is no joy but the consciousness of duties well fulfilled...the faithful mother, whose prayers and counsels have guided the feet of her child in the straight and narrow path, has peace and great joy, alas!..." Vaughan plunges again, this time with only a comma separating "peace and great joy" from the onset of "moral pollution and death," to intone: "...how bitter is the condemnation of her who has failed to warn the child her Maker gave to be trained for heaven, when temptation beckoned him into the alluring paths of sin; when she sees the soul which came to her pure and unsullied, all written over with the black characters of moral pollution and death."

Vaughan's highly emotionalized rhetoric, her spiraling structure, and her commingling of maternal success with heavenly rewards (and maternal failure with hellish punition) captures the cosmic dimensions and intensate style of the sentimental-domestic voice. At the center of this whirlwind is, of course, the figure of The Mother. If "faithful" to the "vast responsibility" of motherhood, Vaughan's rhetoric links maternal duty to eternal

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bliss; however, if a "failed" mother, Vaughan's rhetoric plummets precipitously from beauteous childbirth to blackness and death.

Vaughan is a sentimental-domestic expert. She exploits the language, deploying it for a single (if lengthy) paragraph, only to shift abruptly to more pragmatic prose.

"This train of thought was induced," she announces, "by hearing of the illness in the prison of our city of one whom I knew in other days and very different circumstances." "Sometime since," she reports, "while under the influence of ardent spirits, he committed theft and was arrested and imprisoned." The unfortunate outcome of these errors is described in heightened, fictionalizing terms, consistent with the formulative warp of the piece. "He...is now lingering in the last stages of consumption," she writes, "on the rude pallet of a prison cell; deserted by all his friends, even the mother to whom may be attributed perhaps in a great degree, his present disgraceful situation."

As Vaughan relates this moving story, she exposes the practical utility of sentimentality for rousing readers. The kind of stirring rhetoric she employs, readers are both told and shown, is a state of mind that one achieves, or is moved to, under certain kinds of compelling circumstances. Compelling circumstances, either observed or written, might move readers to the agitated state required for her ensuing argument to hold sway. Vaughan presses the sentimental style into the service of the female activism she soon suggests.

Vaughan's final paragraph, a distinct and separate entity, is a fitting mixture of cautionary tale and call-to-action: "Oh! that mothers would take warning by such fatal examples," Vaughan exhorts. "That they would ever remember the vast responsibility which rests upon them as they write upon the unsullied soul the characters that shall stand there at the Judgment Day, to determine the weal or woe of the beloved ones entrusted to their care." Vaughan here mingles cultural production with reproduction: women will "write" national character and will alone "determine" the nation's oncoming "weal or woe," a future vision that is rendered in terms at once cultural and cosmic.

The critical components of Vaughan's piece--its lapsarian logic, heightened and woman-centered melodrama, and discursively distinct concluding paragraph--make its use of sentimental-domestic discourse instructive. Her sentimental story is capped off with an "authorial addendum." This structural organization appears frequently in *The Lily*'s early years,[8] and it has a history within the women's presses, beginning at least with the moral reform periodicals of the 1830s.[9] Distinct in tone and trajectory, and often conveying a shift in audience address, the "authorial addendum" carried sentimental poetics to the realm of women's politics. In *The Lily*, like earlier women's reform periodicals, the attachment of a practical call-to-action to a woman-centered sentimental narrative helped politicize a popularizing genre for its middle-class audiences. This structural device bridged the gap between the sentimental story and "real" reader response, and between woman's "influence" and the wide, wide, world.

An August, 1856, contribution by Elizabeth Oakes Smith, a contributor to *The Lily* as well as to numerous ladies magazines, uses sentimental-domestic discourse and the authorial addendum in another variation.[10] Oakes Smith deploys the dominant discourse tactically and tactfully, using its popular authority to sustain a radical call for woman suffrage and to promise eternal rewards commensurate with the high stakes in answering it.

Oakes Smith begins by strategically recognizing "the obvious": "women are to be found everywhere out of her sphere." Then she continues, moving by linked phrases across the boundaries between sentimentality and women's reality: "with all the facts before our eyes, that women, by toil and poverty, are driven out of what our brothers call `our appropriate sphere,' and are compelled to bear all the burdens of citizenship, by taxation, responsibility and labor... are forced into the forefront of battle in the hard contest for bread, and are exposed to all the temptations and hazards which our brothers so feelingly enumerate as threatening to us," yet, she breathes, "we [are] not permitted to go to the ballot-box."

Having radically recognized women already "bearing the burdens of citizenship," Oakes Smith then rides accredited discourse specifically to the point of suffrage. "If the ballot box be unfit for the presence of woman," she contends, "it is not fit place for a man," either. This is a trend-setting turn that would soon become a frequent feminist plaint: woman's sentimental-domestic morality, her "feminine purity," is the necessary corrective to the unwholesome public realm from which that very "purity," when wielded by others, has been used to exclude her. "Our brothers need not wonder that women desire to purify by their presence of pure and nobler elements," she coyly explains, "a system which our husbands, and fathers, and sons, admit to be full of evil."

At each step beyond the "woman's sphere," Oakes Smith tactically recalls the authorized language to legitimize woman's presence there. She is careful not to push too far, too fast: "We say, as we have said many times before, remove the interdict, acknowledge us as citizens," she asserts, then returns: "give us the privilege of influencing the election of the men who are to rule us, a privilege which you deny to the noblest matron in the land." As "citizens" here, "noble matrons" will merely "influence the election of men."

In a stirring closing, Oakes Smith restyles the authorial addendum. Rather than attaching a social or political rider to a sentimental tale of womanly weal and woe, she appends a promise of everlasting harmony, suggesting it as the bounteous reward for conquering social injustice. Oakes Smith changes tacks, too, preaching in her addendum to a male ears. Suggestively, she promises them that heaven-on-earth is but a hyphen--a mere dash of the pen--away: "Do away with this glaring inconsistency, and women have little more to ask--the eternal harmonies will roll on, human governments represent better human justice and divine love, and this senseless cry of `out of her sphere' be as little applicable to woman as to the planet which, morning or evening, lends its clear beautiful beams to gild the early or later day."

Repetition and Revisionism: Periodical Pressures and the "Woman's Sphere"

The deployments of sentimental-domestic discourse by Vaughan and Oakes Smith are writerly tactics supported by *The Lily*'s politics and its pages. But the magazine itself also effectuated critique of the prevailing discourse. Its periodical qualities worked to organize individual assaults into a collective fighting force. The repetition of deployment, routinized by the magazine, assaulted the "woman's sphere" relentlessly from every angle, effectively dismantling it.

"Woman's Sphere" of April, 1851, pirated from Jane Grey Swisshelm's *Pittsburgh Saturday Visiter* (1848-57), effectively opens the subject in *The Lily*.[11] In querying parameters, it also questions validity. "How I do wish some of these gentlemen lecturers...[who] so positively assert that 'woman has her sphere,' would tell exactly *what* and where it is," the writer begins.

To refute a male-authored myth of female frailty that the "woman's sphere" responds to and reinscribes, the writer summons her matriarchal heritage. She images her grandmother, "a small, delicate woman...[who] toil[ed] slowly but wearily by the precipitous and dangerous paths to the heights of the Alleghenies"; then her mother, "trudging by her side on foot, stick in hand, urging along the old cow." "Were they in their 'sphere'?...'softening themselves for man's bolder look'?" "Were they taking upon themselves 'duties assigned to them'? Or were they only trying to be 'mannish'?" she presses. Forcing the two

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dominant male fantasies of women--feminine frailty vs. feminist "mannishness"--into direct contact with one another, the writer suggests that both are false fictions, inconsistent with women's experiences and responses in American history.

"The Appropriate Sphere of Woman," a June, 1851, contribution to *The Lily,* uses spatial metaphors to combat limitations, rhetorically renovating "the woman's sphere" as if it were an outgrown room or home. "Man, in his generosity," the contributor jibes, "has carefully and repeatedly measured its length and breadth and drawn its boundaries," she writes, while obedient woman, "has...studiously curbed her thoughts and actions, lest they should be found protruding." So, "young women generally have not engaged in pursuits which would give full scope to all their faculties and energies...," she observes.

The "full scope" the writer wants, she quickly asserts, would "fit [women] to truly perform the sacred duties of wife and mother"; as a secondary outcome, it would also "render them independent of the contingency of marriage for sources of activity and the means of a livelihood." The "woman's sphere" that is meant to enshrine maternal capacities, the contributor argues, actually restricts and even debases it. She seeks its expansion, therefore, to rescue maternal goodness ("as well as" female independence).

"Woman's Sphere--What Is It?" (July 1854) narrativizes this drift, in effect marching woman out of the delimited "woman's sphere" on her own track record. The writer notes that "I have to refer back but a short period of time, to find women excluded from the privileges of education..." because the "same cry was raised that we hear now when a woman dares to step out of her prescribed circle--`Out of Her Sphere!'" However, she continues, "it was discovered that woman could be educated without delicacy and refinement sustaining any serious injury"--compromising her femininity. "Thus was her sphere widened."

Working from education to women's writing, the same logic applies: "it was found that she was capable of writing; and after the stigma attached to the appellation of `literary women' was removed, female authors appeared before the world, who well compared with authors of the other sex."[12]

Moving into the present moment, the contributor's tone becomes more challenging and her language more legalistic. She is pushing to the next step: "Many assert that woman is not man's equal in strength of mind. I say to all such--let them prove it. Has her strength of mind not proved sufficient to accomplishment of all she has yet undertaken?" To this the contributor quickly answers, then challenges again: "Most assuredly it has; and who dare make the assertion that she is not competent to perform all she shall hereafter undertake?"

Frances D. Gage doesn't argumentatively displace the "woman's sphere"; by the time of her 1855 contribution, it has already been quite casually misplaced. "Girls, I will tell you the plain truth. If ever I had a sphere--a sphere peculiar to a woman--fashioned after the models of the present age, I must have lost it a great many years ago," she writes. But, she explains, her new life story has evolved from domestic discourse: "I have found my home sphere--just the thing for a wife and mother--and on its wide spread, elevated, beautiful and harmonious surface I have built my platform of Woman's Rights..." "I shall advocate with earnestness and doctrine, that all the energies that God gave woman should be used in the very best advantage," she promises--and here the progression from "home sphere" to "woman's rights" is clearly figured--"for herself, for her family, and for society."

Such ingenious assaults on the "woman's sphere" were repeated, becoming relentless in *The Lily*; the impact of nascent feminist politics was enhanced by its periodical rhythm, which mounted and maintained persistent, crippling critique. "Woman's Sphere" (September, 1854) is a series of articles contributed by "Belle

Ville"[13] that reveals another way the magazine worked on a formal level to promote the development of feminist discourse.

Ville's series attempts to expose the interconnected claims of woman's inferiority and her limited "sphere." She begins by questioning hierarchy: "Woman was molded and fashioned by the Almighty Power in a mold not inferior, if not superior to man," she asserts, "yet how many are there at the present day who strenuously contend that 'man is born to rule, and woman to obey,'--that 'man is the *lord* of creation'..and woman [must] bow in humble submission." She concedes (against the dictates of domestic discourse) that women and men are "endowed from the beginning with the same moral faculties, to reap the benefits of fuller opportunity: "why, I ask, is she out of her place...in teaching the principles of morality?"

Ville's next entry, (November, 1854), explicitly depends on the magazine's serial format to secure her logical development: "Having in a previous number briefly...shown that [woman] is not out of her sphere when she undertakes to proclaim from the pulpit the glad tidings of salvation," she presumes, "we come in the next place to...show that the whole field of intellectual labor is open to her, and that she is not out of her sphere in laboring therein." The many "and"s Ville writes in this introductory paragraph suggest the ways her argument is developing, one idea tacked onto the preceding one. As she continues from idea to idea, from issue to issue, her very subject, "the woman's sphere," is being evacuated.

An equally brief consideration of woman's "intellectual labor" attempts to proceed accordingly. In a series of contingent assertions, Ville endeavors to elaborate the problem of unequal educational opportunity: "that sex upon whom the greatest amount of cultivation is expended, will be considered as superior in intellectual attainment or capacity," she begins, "and hence exists the erroneous impression within the minds of many who are not able to, or at least do not, distinguish between natural and acquired powers, and therefore conclude that the female sex is inferior in point of mental capacity," she concludes.

In reaching toward new understandings, Ville herself has difficulty distinguishing between natural traits and "capacities" and acquired status and "attainment." However, her lack of clarity is eclipsed by the magazine's periodical publication. Serial submission and the episodic practice of *The Lily's* reading allow Ville to get past logical lapses; she proceeds from number to number, skimming across complications that are forgotten in interim periods, or resolved by subsequent contributors, or bridged by readers in their own ways. The progress of Ville's argument is maintained, despite her individual shortcomings, by the periodical and collaborative format of the magazine itself.

Formatting for Feminism: Re-Fashioning Popular Formulas

The duplicitous deployment of dominant discourse--its use both constructively and critically depending on rhetorical goals--also operated on the level of genre in *The Lily*. Contributors used the sentimental-domestic formula to critique its disempowering possibilities and to liberate or innovate enabling ones.

Amelia Bloomer,[14] *The Lily*'s editor, led this charge by critically awakening her audiences. Bloomer had previously noticed T.S. Arthur's sentimental-domestic novel, Ruling A Wife, approvingly in the magazine, but, after reading it serially in *Arthur's Home Gazette* (1850-2), a weekly that was soon absorbed into the best-selling *Arthur's (Home) Magazine* (1852-98), Bloomer realized that "as [the story] progressed" from issue to issue, "our opinion of it changed very materially." "We were obliged," she continues, "to dissent from the views of the author."

Bloomer's claim of her obligation is important, as we will see. For now, she opens with "an abstract" of the novel which appropriates its sentimental-domestic plotline in order to critique Arthur's use of it. True to the sentimental-domestic formula, the novel in question is a story about social relations with a heroine at its heart.[15] Typically, the sentimental-domestic novel details the trials and triumph of this female protagonist, often an orphan, who is egregiously mistreated by the very authorities in her life who ought to have nurtured and protected her. The heroine's virtuous character is generally demonstrated and measured against a double, another but lesser woman, who is seen to be seduced by luxury or status, for example, or who is conniving, duplicitous, or even vicious--who is somehow fallen in distinctly gendered ways. Plotlines recount the heroine's achievement of identity, of autonomy and self-respect, despite the inequitable treatment and cultural obstacles repeatedly thrown up in her way. Neither her tragic personal circumstances, nor the violent treatment to which she is sometimes subjected, nor the debilitating limitations placed on her sex prevents the female protagonist of the sentimental-domestic novel from becoming a literary heroine in both gendered and American terms: by the repeated exercise of her virtuous character, she achieves self-reliance.

But Arthur's rendering of the formula had subverted this potentially empowering message; so, Bloomer's read of the novel is a pronounced rebuke. "Mr. Lane, the hero of the story," she writes, "was an overbearing, lordly husband, who looked upon his wife as in every respect his inferior, and from whom he extracted the most perfect submission." Mrs. Lane's consciousness "of her abject slavery" is raised when a her maternal authority--the ideological center of domesticity--is contravened by her husband: a "child was given to them...and the father made it his business to direct in the nursery, and to order this and that treatment for the child, contrary to the better judgment of the mother." At this violation of her authority, "her dormant spirit was at length aroused."

This damage to the foundation of the domestic novel causes that narrative to collapse. Mrs. Lane, "with her baby," fled "to the city," where, swindled of her "last dollar," she finds herself alone, destitute and desperate. When "a man passing" offers "to take Mrs. L. to the United States Hotel," he instead conducts her "to a house of prostitution!"[16] Mrs. Lane attempted, but "escape was impossible--she was locked in!" Her "most heart-touching appeals" for sympathy were "all in vain," Bloomer recounts.

Bloomer's frustration peaks as she reaches Arthur's climax. "While they were dragging [Mrs. Lane] from the room--she the meanwhile wringing her hands and shrieking for mercy--the door was open," Bloomer rails, and who but "Mr. Lane stood before them!"

"This," Bloomer dashes, "is the substance of the story." Bloomer's outrage is apparent in her grammar and syntax as much as her comments; one paragraph, long an commas and furious dashes and short on the more calming and placed periods, lists her grievances. "You have only shown that we are weak and helpless--incapable of taking care of ourselves or keeping out of harm's way," she charges. She summons the sentimental structure, reciting the heroine's trials by Arthur's hand: "No matter to how bad a man a woman is tied--no matter to how much insult she may be subjected--no matter...her feelings, and...the indifference and scorn [of] her opinions, no matter how he won her young heart with promises of...love [only to] be transformed into a demon--and her [sense of] disgust and loathing--," Bloomer barely stops to breath, "you have shown us that it is useless for a [women] to think of freeing herself...[for]...should she attempt [to be freed], she will fall into the snares and dangers from which she is powerless to extricate herself, and which will speedily cause her to repent the step and sigh and return." "But," Bloomer rails, to a the very marriage "from which there is no escape, and [to] this same cruel man from whom she has fled," [and who], humiliatingly, "comes to her rescue."

"Now, Mr. Arthur," Bloomer reproves, taking the author to task, "I believe...that any woman high-souled enough to take the step which Mrs. Lane did, would be capable of taking care of herself and keeping her character unspotted." "I believe, sir," she repeats, that "there are thousands of wronged and degraded women, who, if they would throw off the yoke that binds them, would show to the world that it was only while enslaved that they were incapable of self protection..." Liberating women from the confines of Arthur's (indeed, society's) woman trap, Bloomer imagines a truly heroic heroine at the center of a new rendering of the story: "...when freed," she continues, women "could provide for themselves, meet dangers, resist temptations, bid defiance to the libertine, or, if insulted, revenge the insult."

Bloomer wants and demands this different story. "Why did you not let Mrs. Lane show that she was equal to the emergency in which you placed her?" Pushing the boundaries of the sentimental storyline, she asks further, "Why not let her rise superior to so dependent and so *degrading* a position?" Advancing on, she demands still more: "Why not let her seek and find some honorable employment, where, if but for a day, she might support herself and her child by her own independent exertions?" "Instead of elevating the character of women, and teaching her to respect herself"--an empowering possibility of the domestic story--"you have humbled her in her own eyes, and those of the world."

Such deep defilement of a lady compels corrective action. "I think women should exercise great forbearance, and put up with many things hard to endure before resorting to the extreme step of separation," Bloomer writes in a second letter. "Yet," she delimits, "I believe there is a point beyond which endurance ceases to be a virtue." Beyond that point, she explains, "it is both her right and her duty to seek safety and peace."

A critical ideological transition is written here, precisely using prevailing gender discourse to make the turn. By conjoining "rights" and "duties" together under the rubric of woman's "virtue," Bloomer both delimits and expands--she critically redefines--the strongly-gendered notion of "feminine virtue." In her reconstruction, there is a point beyond which the seemingly endless requirements of "feminine virtue" cannot go without discrediting it. At that moment--the moment when virtue may be undone--a good woman is obliged to act. It remains her duty, an accredited "feminine" response, and becomes her "right," a new feminist endowment, to act independently, and in her own interest. Here the popular gender discourse is challenged from within itself, transforming the concept of "feminine virtue" so as to reach--indeed require--the autonomy, self-sufficiency and strength this idea had previously effaced or opposed.

This kind of turn--accomplished by pushing domestic discourse to its own extremes, so that one element confounds or contradicts other, definitive elements, threatening to explode the whole configuration--is a recurrent a pattern in the first-generation feminist magazines. In this example, the ideological transition from woman's private "duties" to public "rights" is mediated by pressure to redefine the popular domestic conception of her "feminine virtue."

Even more distinctive is the editorial stance. Bloomer uses her formal authority as editor to address Arthur multiply--her "our" means both herself formally and her readers collectively. Throughout the letter sequence, she alternately speaks of "I" and "we," individual and collective, personal and political. These multiple and overlapping self-representations create an authorial position that is at once oppositional and collaborative, formal and personal, professional (in the editorial "we") and independent. It constructs a feminist editorial voice.

Bloomer's instructive example blossoms in *The Lily*'s pages. A March, 1855, contribution, "The Printer Girls," for example, rewrites the sentimental-domestic plot suggestively. Janet Malcolm, desolate after the (formulaic) death of her mother, makes her way to "the city." There, rather than being deceived and deflowered, she is befriended by a dark-haired, dark-eyed young woman, the double and complement of Janet's blond and blue-eyed beauty. Together the two open a print shop and, honorably employed, live fulfilling lives of their own thereafter.[17] Having learned to read the popular mode politically, contributors can use familiar "feminine" formulas to re-write stories of women's lives.

A more sophisticated submission is "What Can Woman Do--Or the Influence of An Example," a September, 1850, contribution to *The Lily* by Alice B. Haven Neal, a novelist, and yet another woman's-rights woman who frequently found a place to speak in popular women's magazines, including the market-leading *Godey's*.[18] The story is a temperance tale told by a feminist. A double-narrative, half political parable and half sentimental-domestic story, Neal's tale juxtaposes genres to push into a transition to new ideas of women's identities and lives. The center of the story is, of course, its heroine, Isabel Gray, who shades between the feminist ideal of commitment to principles chosen and the domestic ideal of effective virtue.

Offered a glass of wine by her host, Isabel responds "in a quick, earnest voice, which drew the attention of all" that "I will drink to Lucy with all my heart, but in water if you please." The "ladies," "as they re-entered the drawing room," cannot read her confusing behavior. Isabel doesn't fully belong in this story.

"Why, act in such a strange way?" they ask. Isabel's is cagey but clear: "How very terrible!" she exclaims in mock femininity. "Is it such a mighty offense?" "My heart has long condemned the practice of convivial drinking, and I cannot countenance it even by *seeming* to join."

Acknowledging her visibility as both an oddity and an example, Isabel asserts that "we none of us know the influence we exert." This night she "had a definite object in [her] pointed refusal." "It is but very lately that [young Lewis] has seen what a moral and mental ruin threatened him, and has resolved to gain mastery over the temptation." Evoking the sentimental structure, she continues: "To-night was his first trial." "I have spared him one stroke--he will be stronger the next time to refuse for himself."

The women are so rapt by this illustration of "female influence" that one guest comments to Isabel, "you should have been a novelist." While Isabel isn't, Neal is. The author uses Isabel's story to create a larger narrative based on a familiar formula. She uses Isabel to move beyond her.

Lewis, too, is moved by the heroine's exemplary influence: "God bless you, Miss Gray," he murmurs. Marked by that sentiment and the "friendly clasp of [Isabel's] hand," Lewis and Isabel seemed destined for domestic bliss.

But Neal interrupts the apparent romance plot, pursuing instead a feminist angle. To make the turn, she employs the structural device of the "authorial addendum," but in a new place. Instead of positioning her political paragraph at the end of the narrative, she interjects it in the middle, signaling further development in the remainder of the story. "Ah, my sisters," she proclaims, "if you could but realize that all the beauty and grace are but talents entrusted to your keeping, and that the happiness of many may rest upon the most trivial act, you would not use that loveliness for an ignoble triumph, or so thoughtlessly tread the path of life!"

Such sentiments have been articulated in "authorial addenda" before, but here they are employed as a transition within a story that goes further ideologically. By using a conclusory device as a transitional one, Neal pushes beyond the tradition in which she is working, just as her heroine does.

As the narrative reconvenes, Isabel is centered, and is portrayed with a new authority. "Oh, Isabel," Lucy Rushton entreats, "pray advise me." "You always know everything," she says. Should she trust her niece's betrothal to Lewis, who claims to be a reformed drinker? Should young Emily "run the risk" of his "recidivism?" Lucy beseeches. "Yes, if she chooses it," Isabel tellingly replies. "Emily is a thoughtful and sensible girl. She does not act without judgment," she has observed. "Sufficient time has elapsed to try Lewis' principles, and her companionship will strengthen them," she assures.

"And so it proved," Neal writes, shifting abruptly again from the genre of the short story to that of a political parable. "It," readers must infer, is the immense "influence" of a principled woman's "example." "There are now few happier homes than the cheerful, hospitable household over which Emily Lewis presides." Merging the happy ending of this domestic plot with the unconventional conclusion of a feminist fable, Neal continues, "Isabel Gray is always a favorite guest" in this harmonious home.

As to Isabel's story, "Robert predicts she will never marry." That may also "prove so," Neal writes, "for she is not of those who would sacrifice herself for fortune, or give her hand to any man she did not thoroughly respect and sympathize with, to escape that really very tolerable fate--becoming an old maid." Apparently, since Isabel can only marry her equal, there is no hero for her story. Hers must be a different destiny.

Both Emily and Isabel provide viable (if sudden) conclusions to women's stories. Each is a heroine whose goals are achieved by her inner strength and "good judgment." And it is Isabel's powerful example--"influence" activated--that enables both the domestic harmony of the Lewis household and the feminist independence of Isabel's own story.

In its dual conclusions, Neal's contribution promotes the positive power of female "influence," "entrusted to [women's] keeping," so long as women themselves claim authorship of and authority over its meanings, personal and political. The story is reaching for "female influence" that actuates feminist empowerment. But it isn't there yet. For Isabel's uncommon agency is curtailed within the story. Her "power" is limited and partial, since it emanates from her "choice" of what *not* to do. Moreover, while Isabel represents choice, she stays above communal choices herself. As the parable closes, she remains solitary, and lives under the burden as much as the empowerment of exemplary status.

Nevertheless, stories like Neal's push through transitions; they promote the evolution of new notions of women's powers and places in the world.[19] What's more, the dual structure of this story holds implications for the gender and social politics of the incipient women's movement. The formulaic doubling of the two heroines, each a role model, formulates solidarity by allowing new conceptions to cooperate with the old. New visions here emerge from established constructions, and co-exist with those antecedents without discrediting them.

Creating Self-Representations: Converting the Popular to Politics

In her authorial addendum, Amelia Bloomer expresses her vision of *The Lily* as a dynamic space multiply equipped to engender such collaboration and transformation. She speaks not to the male author, T.S. Arthur, but to her women readers when she puts the capabilities of herself and her magazine to the cause of authoring new images of woman and revising the too-familiar formula of her life. "We care not what the name, or how popular the writer, who holds up the weakness of woman to public view," Bloomer proclaims, "so long as we have a pen to write, or a voice to speak, we shall defend our sex from such libelous imputations.--Woman has too long been kept in awe, and her powers of mind and body cramped and fettered by the false ideas in regard to her sphere, and her duty, which man has heretofore so successfully impressed upon the public mind. It is time she, herself, arouse, and teach him another lesson."

There is always, of course, another lesson to teach.

1.In addition to *The Lily*, an 8-page monthly edited for much of its nine-year run by Amelia Bloomer in Seneca Falls, New York, there was the intellectual and policy-oriented *Una* (1853-5), a 16-page monthly edited by Pauline Wright Davis of Providence, Rhode Island; *The Genius of Liberty* (1851-3) an 8-page monthly edited by Elizabeth Aldrich of Cincinnati, Ohio; *The Pioneer and Women's Advocate* (1852-3), Anna W. Spenser's 4-page, semi-monthly, published in East Greenwich, Rhode Island; *The Woman's Advocate* (January 1855-58 or 1860), Anne McDowell's Philadelphia monthly, a periodical written, edited, printed, and sold exclusively by women; and *The Sibyl* (1856-64), edited by Dr. Lydia Sayer Hasbrouk of Middletown, New York, originally a dress reform publication. Selected articles from the first-generation feminist magazines are collected with an introduction and a useful appendix of feminist contributors by Ann Russo and Cheris Kramarae, eds. The Radical Women's Press of the 1850s (New York: Routledge, 1991). See also, Linda Steiner. The Women's Suffrage Press 1850-1900: A Cultural Analysis. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. University of Illinois, 1979.

2.Initiated by the Female Temperance Society of Seneca Falls, *The Lily: Devoted to Temperance and Literature* continued with that subtitle until January, 1852, when Bloomer illustrated the front cover with an engraving of the now-famous "Bloomer costume," signaling the magazine's expansion into a larger set of "*Interests of Women.*"

3.The circulations of these popular women's magazines continued to rise after the Civil War. *Godey's* proclaimed circulation in 1860 was 150,000; by 1869, the magazine claimed 500,000 readers. *Peterson's* circulation came closest to *Godey's* in the 1850s, probably exceeded it by the Civil War. Patricia Okker provides these figures in Our Sister Editors: Sarah J. Hale and the Tradition of Nineteenth-Century American Women Editors (Athens: University of Georgia, 1995), pp. 56-7. The immense (even if exaggerated) circulations were helped by improving print technologies, and were aided by the Post Office Act of 1852, which reduced postage rates dramatically and allowed postage payment at offices of mailing.

4.Patricia Okker has identified more than 600 nineteenth-century American women periodical editors, and has provided an invaluable list of these women and their major affiliation in her Our Sister

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Editors: Sarah J. Hale and the Tradition of Nineteenth-Century American Women Editors (Athens: University of Georgia, 1995). Okker perhaps overstates the case somewhat; she includes women who did not clearly have masthead and/or management roles; women who edited highly specialized publications; and women editors of local organization organs. The inclusion of these women is appropriate to her project of outlining the extent of women's editorial activity in the nineteenth century, but it exaggerates to some degree the explosive power of the somewhat fewer women who edited influential and/or national publications.

5.The women's magazine circulation figures are given by Frank Luther Mott. A History of American Magazines, Vol. II: 1825-1850. (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1932), p. 41. Patricia Okker provides the national average in Our Sister Editors (Athens: University of Georgia, 1995), p. 56.

6.While some major magazines of the 1850s, notably *Harper's*, eschewed advertising (save for notices of its own books), low rates (on average, $20 per octavo page; $ .15 per line) did gradually encourage advertisers to consider buying magazine space. *Godey's* and *Peterson's* ran between 5-10 pages of advertising per issue at this time; *The Lily* and its contemporaries generally ran few advertisements, and Aldrich's *The Genius of Liberty* accepted none.

7.While biographical information about Vaughan is surprisingly scarce, it is known that Vaughan's opposition to Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony at the first annual Woman's New York State Temperance Society convention caused the two to withdraw from both the society and the temperance movement overall after 1853. In addition, Vaughan is known to have co-edited, with Linus Brockett, Women's Work in the Civil War: A Record of Heroism, Patriotism and Patience (Philadelphia: Ziegler, McCurdy, 1867). A short story, "Fruits of Sorrow, or an Old Maid's Story," is in Sandra Koppelman. Old Maids: Short Stories by Nineteenth Century U. S. Women Writers (London: Pandora Press, 1984).

8.This combination of qualities can be found in *Lily* contributions, as well as articles published in the other five feminist magazines of the 1850s. For example, it is a particularly pervasive strategy in arguments for equal employment opportunity for women and calls of temperance among men. An anonymous November, 1854, contributor to *The Lily*, for example, sounds like Vaughan when arguing that closing avenues of industry to women may lead them into paths of vice. An authorial addendum then calls out to the wider society in a different voice: "Men!" the writer hails. "Recompense [women] as you will be rewarded. Better reward them for virtuous toil than for that inglorious ase [sic] which keeps their souls from the kingdom of heaven. For those who must labor to live, open your medical establishments, printing offices, clerkships, manufactories. Let woman's nimble fingers and active energy be employed according to her capacity. Let her do what she can, and pay her as she earns, and the blessing of the fatherless and destitute be upon you." While Russo and Kramarae don't analyze selections, their contents provides additional evidence of this particular amalgamation. See Radical Women's Press of the 1850s (New York: Routledge, 1991), especially "Working Into Poverty," pp. 95-123.

9.An 1836 serial published in *The Advocate of Moral Reform* (1835-41), an expose in a sentimental-domestic mode, provides an example. The serial describes in detail the agonizing story of an innocent young woman, seduced with the promise of marriage, who is instead drugged, deflowered, and left to die in childbirth by her intended. This sensational and sentimental narrative is then addended with the author's explicit warning about real life. In this case, the writer tells readers to beware of the wrongful yet pervasive excesses of men, even those who appear to be respectable gentlemen.

The *Advocate* at this time was under the editorship of Sarah Towne Smith Martyn (dates not available), a temperance and moral reform activist and editor. Martyn later edited the *Olive Plant and Ladies' Temperance Advocate* (1841-2), as well as the *True Advocate*, and the *White Banner*, during the 1840s. She retired from moral reform work to edit her own women's magazine, *The Ladies Wreath* (1846-55), a $1.00/year, 36-page New York monthly that claimed a circulation of 25,000 at the height of its popularity in 1853. The *Wreath* was later edited by Helen Irving, wife of the nephew and biographer of Washington Irving, between 1856-62.

10.Oakes Smith (1806-1893) wrote poems, sketches and short pieces for a host of women's magazines, including *Godey's* and *Lady's Companion* (1834-44), and for literary magazines, including *Graham's* and the *Southern Literary Messenger* (1835-59). She also published a series of woman's rights articles in Greeley's *New York Tribune*, later collected as Woman and Her Needs (1851). Her Hints on Dress and Beauty (1852) was shortly followed by an odd, feminist-leaning novel, Bertha and Lily (1854), which tells the tale of a woman of apparently superior character who, after being seduced, bares a child out of wedlock, only to lose the baby during a period of "madness." She later co-edited a short-lived literary magazine, *Great Republican Monthly* (1859).

11.Swisshelm (1815-1884) insisted on Dr. Johnson's spelling. *The Visiter* spoke for abolition, temperance, and women's suffrage. Although Swisshelm was often critical of many of the women and the activities of the women's movement, in her writings she pushed hard for an end to the "woman's sphere." After an unhappy marriage, Swisshelm owned and edited the anti-slavery paper, the *St. Cloud Visiter* (1857-8). She launched *The St. Cloud Democrat* (1858-66), after a libel suit forced her to agree never to mention the Democratic power structure in her *Saturday Visiter* again. Later, she edited her own Republican paper, *Reconstructionist* (1865-66).

12.Indeed, in marketplace terms, many of these women writers were the "scribbling women" whose sentimental-domestic novels often surpassed their male colleagues in popularity and sales. The success of women writers of domestic novels is a critical commonplace today, and the premise of a range of book-length feminist analyses of the genre and its impact, including Ann Douglas (1977); Mary Kelley (1984); Mary Ryan (1984); Jane Tompkins (1985); Cathy Davidson (1986); and Gillian Brown (1991). Patricia Okker has very recently argued that popular women's magazines were instrumental in authorizing novel-writing as a "feminine" pursuit. See Our Sister Editors: Sarah J. Hale and the Tradition of Nineteenth-Century American Women Editors (Athens: University of Georgia, 1995).

13.Although this pseudonym is not listed in any available index, its translation from the French--"beautiful town" or "beautiful city"--suggests the possibility.

14.Amelia Bloomer (1818-1894) helped organize the Ladies Temperance Society in Seneca Falls that launched *The Lily*. After 1852, when Bloomer alone edited and published the magazine, it became an influential journal advocating a range of women's rights reforms and its offices a central meeting place for women in the Seneca Falls area. Bloomer's 1851 editorial in *The Lily* advocating the wearing of the Turkish-style pants outfit that would soon, in ridicule, bear her name, brought notoriety to the costume and a surge in subscriptions to the magazine. After moving to Ohio with her husband, and giving over *The Lily* to Mary B. Birdsall, former women's department editor of the *Indiana Farmer* (1851-61), Bloomer and her husband owned and edited the *Western Home Visitor* (1853-55).

15.The aspects to which I refer are drawn from Nina Baym's typology in Woman's Fiction: A Guide to Novels by and about Women in America, 1820-1870 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978).

16.Karen Halttunen argues that this trope arose around the mid-nineteenth century out of a crisis of social identity between women and men in a culture destabilized by enormous social, geographic and economic shifts. See Karen Halttunen. Confidence Men and Painted Women (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

17.This scenario is evocative of the configurations of the same-sex friendships between woman-identified women that Carol Smith-Rosenberg has described in her germinal article, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations Between Women in Nineteenth Century America." The piece first appeared in the premiere issue of Signs, v. 1, no. 1 (1975), and was later reprinted in Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985).

18."Cousin Alice" (1827-63), as she was pseudonymously known, met her husband through her frequent publication of stories in his magazine, *Neal's Saturday Gazette and Lady's Literary Museum* (1836-53). Her novels include: Helen Morton's Trial (1849); The Gossips of Rivertown (1850), a biting commentary she famously regretted having published; No Such Word As Fail (1852) and Patient Waiting No Loss (1853). Her last novel, The Good Report, was published posthumously in 1867.

19.John Cawelti has discussed the role of formula stories in allowing changing values to be assimilated in a non-threatening way into established imaginary constructs. See Adventure, Mystery, Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), especially pp. 10-36.

Cattle Papers and the Cowboy:

Myth-Making in the *Bad Lands Cow Boy*

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Cattle Papers and the Cowboy:
Myth-Making in the *Bad Lands Cow Boy*

Few places in the world have escaped the influence of the American cowboy image. Historians credit the transformation of cowboy from dangerous to romantic by looking at advertising, promotion, and cheap novels of the late last century. In this paper the author examines another creator of the cowboy myth, the frontier cattle town newspaper. By analyzing the entire edition of the *Bad Lands Cow Boy*, he concluded that newspapers published in cattle towns also played a role in creation of the romantic myth of the American cowboy.

Cattle Papers and the Cowboy:

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Few places in the world have escaped the influence of the American cowboy image. The icon in hat and spurs turned Marlboro into the world's largest selling cigarette. Hardly a year goes by without yet another film or television tribute to the cowboy, and in the century or so since actual cowboys patrolled an actual American frontier, the image has sold everything from potato chips to laundry detergent. In fact, the cowboy image is one of America's most enduring myths, almost a world symbol of the United States itself.[1]

Historians have traced the cowboy myth's beginnings to advertising, promotion, and cheap novels of the late last century. In this paper I wish to examine another creator of the cowboy myth, the frontier cattle town newspaper. In fact, this research focuses on perhaps one of the most significant of early cattle papers published in western cattle boom towns, *The Bad Lands Cow Boy*. Its significance is based on its close relationship to two key creators of the cowboy myth in America, Theodore Roosevelt and Marquis de Morés. *The Cow Boy,* like other Old West cattle town papers, has not been considered by historians as a influence on development of the cowboy myth. But it seems that their role ought to be reevaluated as an important contributor to the way this significant American icon has been portrayed since the end of the last century.

What is the cowboy myth?

The idea of the frontier in American history was most famously distilled by Frederick Jackson Turner soon after the U.S. Government declared an end to the frontier in

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[1] William W. Savage, Jr., *The Cowboy Hero. His Image in American History and Culture.* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1979) 3. Robert G. Athearn, *The Mythic West in Twentieth Century*

1890. Turner's idea was not completely new: his themes of frontier and individualism can be traced farther back in American history. The frontier pioneer icon of a young man, tough, intensely-loyal, freedom-loving, lonely but noble, honest, polite to women but fearsome enemies of bad guys, has been traced to colonial times.[2] Appropriation of this ideal to the cowboy began in the mid-1880s. By the early 1900s, with the publication of the phenomenally-successful novel *The Virginian* by Owen Wister, the cowboy knight of the Old West was firmly established for its astonishing run as one of America's most familiar heroes.[3] Along with advertisers such as Marlboro, John Wayne perhaps more than any recent figure has perpetuated the cowboy hero ideal. "A man should keep his word, never intentionally insult anyone, and not look for trouble," said Wayne, born in Iowa as Marion Morrison. "But in case of trouble, a man should make certain that he won."[4] The cowboy image is marbled throughout American culture in all kinds of ways, not only as a way to sell merchandise, but as a nostalgic, "lost ideal." For instance, desire to be like the noble cowboy of the Old West is today a main inducement to buying guns.[5]

Real cowboys, as common sense might tell us, were not usually as virtuous as later portrayals, nor was their job all that romantic. Controlling large herds of cattle across huge stretches of trackless prairie was tough, dirty and dangerous. Many young men from the east were attracted to cowboy life, but usually they weren't the most gentlemanly.[6] In fact, between the end of the Civil War, when the big cattle drives began, and 1887, when the noble cowboy myth became widely promoted, cowboys were generally not held in much esteem. "Throughout the east, the name 'cowboy' is looked upon as a synonym for

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America. (Lawrence: the University of Kansas Press, 1986) 23. History and literature on cowboys could fill a library.

[2] Don D. Walker, *Clio's Cowboys. Studies in the Historiography of the Cattle Trade*. (Lincoln and London: the University of Nebraska Press, 1981) 76, 79; Daniel J. Boorstin, *The Americans. The National Experience*. (New York: Random House, 1965) 456.

[3] Jack Weston, *The Real American Cowboy*. (New York: Schocken Books, 1985) 212.

[4] Savage, 25.

[5] Savage, 54;

lawlessness and cussedness," editorialized the Bismarck (ND) *Tribune*, in questioning the use of the name for a newspaper.[7] "[The cowboy] was often held in disfavor by the general population as a rough, uncouth, and possibly lawless man."[8] Disdain reached to the highest levels: in 1881 President Chester Arthur in his address to Congress denounced cowboys as "armed desperados" blocking peaceful settlement of Arizona Territory.[9]

The transformation of the cowboy from dangerous troublemaker to knight on horseback came so quickly that one can almost date it to the year: 1887. Around that date several things occurred to set the stage for the end of cowboy as reality, and the beginning of cowboy as myth:

• the tough winter of 1886-87, along with a major market slump, forced many cattlemen into bankruptcy. Long cattle drives tapered to an end, and in 1890 the U.S. Government declared the western frontier to be closed. Even cowboys and cattle newspapers themselves saw the beginning of the myth: cowboys began to pose for photos and held mock round-ups and shootouts for tourists.[10]

• Publication of the first Buck Taylor dime novel, featuring America's "first cowboy hero."[11] Col. William F. ("Buffalo Bill") Cody's Wild West show had romanticized the Old West since the late 1870s, but "There was no cowboy hero before William F. Cody presented William Levi Taylor, aka 'Buck" Taylor, to the public as a featured attraction in his wild west pageant in 1884."[12] Buck "helped change the old

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[6] Savage, 4;
[7] Ray H. Mattison, "Ranching in the Dakota Badlands. A Study of Roosevelt's Contemporaries." *North Dakota History* 19 (April 1952), 114.
[8] Peter Watts, *A Dictionary of the Old West 1870-1900*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977) 100.
[9] Don Russell, *The Lives and Legends of Buffalo Bill*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press 1960) 305.
[10] William H. Forbis, *The Cowboys*. (New York: Time-Life Books, 1973) 224-5; Gene M. Gressley, *Bankers and Cattlemen*. (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1966) 57. *The Bad Lands Cow Boy* promoted round-up photos at $5 a set, "going off like hot cakes," with 40 sets sold in three months. (October 28, 1886, 1.)
[11] Russell, 305.
[12] Savage, 109.

reputation of cowboys as ruffians,"[13] and a generation of boys devoured the new image in dime novels, and soon, on movie screens.[14]

• Publication of Theodore Roosevelt's first cowboy paean, *Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail*, 1888. As a popular and prolific author as well as a lifetime politician who became one of the United States' greatest presidents, Roosevelt's passion swayed a generation, and when it came to the Old West, he "was afflicted with a terminal case of cowboyitis."[15] This and subsequent books lionized cowboys, "as hardy and self-reliant as any men who ever breathed...simple and generous...treat a stranger with the most whole-souled hospitality...hospitable, hardy, adventurous....[16] Roosevelt echoed earlier newspaper interviews rebuking the negative image of cowboys, calling them "outrages quoted in Eastern papers."[17] Influence of "the cowboy president" was immense; it changed the east's idea of the west as a savage place to the west as a place which "aspired to lofty ideals."[18]

This seems to indicate that it these influences in the late 1880s played the major role in changing the cowboy image from negative to positive. But another influence has been ignored by western historians: the frontier cattle papers. In fact, as early as February 1884 one such paper already used familiar language of the noble cowboy to repudiate the old image and build the one we find more familiar today, *The Bad Lands Cow Boy*.

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[13] Weston, 231; Sean Dennis Cashman, *America in the Gilded Age*. (New York and London: New York University Press, 1984) 279.
[14] "The Great Train Robbery," 1903, first full-length feature movie, was a western. Tom Mix, first cowboy film hero, entered movie screens beginning in 1909.
[15] Athearn, 56.
[16] Theodore Roosevelt, *Ranch Life and the Hunting Trail*. (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, reprint edition, 1983) 9-10, 100.
[17] Roosevelt, 13.
[18] Paul O'Neil, *The Old West. The End and the Myth*. (Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books, 1979) 128.

The Bad Lands Cow Boy

Arthur T. Packard, newly graduated from Michigan State University (class of 1883), moved to Dakota Territory as a journalist, from the *Bismarck Tribune* to the *Mandan Pioneer* to Medora in late 1883.[19] He planned only a hunting trip,[20] but saw potential in a booming cow town almost single-handedly built by the Marquis de Morés, a French aristocrat and entrepreneur. A rich American entrepreneur also had come to the Badlands town, Theodore Roosevelt. The triumvirate of Roosevelt, Morés and Packard by early 1884 formed Medora's literary and cultural nucleus in the rough low hills of western Dakota Territory. They came for clean air and adventure, or so Roosevelt said later, but more importantly at the time, the attraction was money. By the 1880s, rich fortune-seekers from the east and Europe believed that big money could be made in western stock breeding, and green-backed cattlemen acquired huge ranches with tens of thousands of beasts on the hoof.[21] Roosevelt's New York background is well known; Morés has not been well-remembered in history, but his plans for ranch-to-table beef production on a huge scale, and his penchant for flamboyant hyperbole, attracted attention of major newspapers in the United States and Europe. Dashing, rich, Riviera-born, Morés became one of the country's first media celebrities, a "peer of the Western Realm."[22]

Packard was neither rich nor a cattleman, but apparently knew an opportunity when he saw one. His introductory editorial on page one of the first *Bad Lands Cow Boy* explained that not only was the cattle paper (the editor's term) to report and support the industry in Medora, but "to make some almighty dollars." In fact, during the weekly's entire run, from February 7, 1884, through the end of 1886, the front-page masthead explained, "The *Cow Boy* is not published for fun, but for $2 per year."

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[19] Donald Dresden, *The Marquis de Morés. Emperor of the Bad Lands*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma, 1970) 101; *The Bad Lands Cow Boy*, March 20, 1884, 1.

[20] Hermann Hagedorn, *Roosevelt in the Bad Lands*. (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930) 75.

[21] Gressley, 77.

[22] Forbis, 59; Ross F. Collins, "Building a Media Celebrity: The Marquis de Morés and the Gilded Age." *North Dakota Journal of Speech and Theatre* 7 (1994), 24-41. Morés was avidly covered in newspapers around the world. Two of the most authoritative, *The New York Times* and *Le Temps* of Paris, published a number of articles, many on the front page. The *Times* published at least eight, three on page 1.

Frontier newspapers in the Old West were usually established by printers, primarily to "boom," or promote settlement, raise advertising and help fill the publisher's pockets. Most emphasized agriculture, offering a form for "proving up" claims required by the government for new settlers under the Homestead Act. A few boomed mining towns, and a few more boomed cattle towns.[23] Packard's *Cow Boy*, too, aimed at making money, and like so many pioneer papers it too was a reflection of a colorful personality working in a one-person shop: a standing masthead on pages one and four of the *Cow Boy* emphasized that it was *by* A.T. Packard—not merely "published by."

In other, perhaps more significant ways, the *Cow Boy*[24] was different. It was published in one of only eight "frontier" territories left in the United States by 1880 census, comprising 165 counties. Of those counties, 78 had newspapers, in an average county population of 5,508.[25] In contrast, the *Cow Boy* was published in Billings County, 737 residents in 1885, 251 of whom lived in Medora.[26] What is more, unlike the cattle paper *Wichita Eagle*, and most other frontier newspapers,[27] Packard repeatedly declared his antipathy to booming. In one issue he called it "almost lying" (April 24, 1884, 4). In another issue Packard explained that, unlike an "agricultural town," Medora as a "cattle town" assured its future, and "We don't want a boomed town and won't have it as long as the voice of the *Cow Boy* reverberates." In the main, Packard kept his word: frontier boomer hyperbole was seldom part of the *Cow Boy*, unless it related to the cowboys themselves.

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[23] Barbara Cloud, "Establishing the Frontier Newspaper: A Study of Eight Western Territories." *Journalism Quarterly* 61 (Winter 1984), 806; Boorstin, 129; Donald W. Whisenhunt, "The Frontier Newspaper: A Guide to Society and Culture." *Journalism Quarterly* 65 (Winter 1968), 100; Julie Dagenais, "Newspaper Language as an Active Agent in the building of a Frontier Town." *American Speech* 17 (May 1967), 115. Dagenais examined the *Wichita Eagle*, as a "cow town" newspaper, the only published historical analysis of a cattle paper in a national journal located by the author.

[24] Every available edition of the *Bad Lands Cow Boy* has been consulted; 17 of 152 editions are missing. Spelling of "cowboy" varies in the newspaper, even within single editions. In quotations, original spelling has been preserved.

[25] Cloud, 807-8.

[26] Commissioner of Immigration, Dakota Territory, *Resources of Dakota*. Pierre, D.T.: 1887, 324; Billings County Historical Society, *Echoing Trails. Billings County History*. (Medora: 1979) 47. The county did support 24,603 head of cattle, however.

[27] "A blossoming young girl," the *Eagle* said of Wichita. "Best climate, most productive soil, handsomest women, smartest children on God's green earth." Quoted by Dagenais, 117.

Unusual too was the background of the paper's editor. Packard was not a printer by trade, and indeed was a university graduate in a time when few such individuals were to be found in frontier cattle towns. He was young, 22, but this wasn't unusual in the Old West, and in fact the rest of the Medora triumvirate, Roosevelt and Morés, were in their mid-20s. But unlike many frontier newspapers, in addition to profit Packard published with a mission: to change the image of the cowboy from ruffian to respected.

Packard stated his goal in his second issue, Feb. 14, 1884 (p. 1):

> We have been asked why we named our paper *The Bad Lands Cow Boy*. We adopted the name in the first place to attract attention, which it certainly does. Not to the paper itself, however, do we wish to attract attention, as much as to some facts which we wish to spread abroad as much as possible. First, that cow boys in the West are, as a rule, one of the most peaceful and law-abiding classes of citizens that we have....The term "cow boy" has been a reproach long enough. Every other paper in the land has joined hands to heap contumely on the devoted head of the cow boy. We will stand singly and alone and uphold a name which we know represents a good cause."

In fact, the *Cow Boy* apparently did attract attention in the east, greeted not only by the Bismarck *Tribune*, but by papers as far away as New York City. The *Cow Boy* reprinted many of these:

"The editor cannot be so stupidly blind as to be unaware of the fact that throughout the East the name "cowboy" is looked upon as a synonym for lawlessness and cussedness in its most active form...in eastern eyes it means all that is bad, lawless and desperate." (Bismarck *Tribune*, quoted in *Cow Boy*, March 20, 1884, 1.)

A "unique" title, a "thorough cattle paper," reported the St. Paul (MN*) Pioneer-Press,* adding that Packard hoped to promote the idea that "cowboys, as a rule, are good citizens." (*Cow Boy,* March 20, 1884, 1.)

"The advertising columns of the *Bad Lands Cow Boy* presents [sic] a very unique appearance to the eastern reader," observed the Fargo Daily *Argus*, quoted in the *Cow Boy*, July 3, 1884, 1.

In introducing Packard's *Cow Boy* to New York readers, the New York *Sun* was quoted as calling Packard "a former Chicago reporter," which Packard did not dispute, although he must have worked as a part-time student or stringer, as he graduated from Michigan in 1883 and worked for at least two newspapers before reaching Medora barely six months later. The New York *Herald* greeted the *Cow Boy* by claiming "its proprietor and editor is the Marquis de Morés." This link was vigorously denied by the independent-minded Packard, (March 20 and April 3, 1884, 1), who in fact seemed to give more column inches to Roosevelt than to Morés.

Packard clearly aimed his newspaper at readers back east, as did many frontier editors trying to attract money and settlement. Packard declared, "Its columns will be full of interesting matter to cattle men all over the United States." (*Cow Boy*, Feb. 7, 1884, 4, from a self-promotional advertisement). In subsequent issues Packard wrote that the *Cow*

Boy was being widely read back east. As evidence, he noted that already the first issue had become a collector's item: "We have twice been offered $5 for the first copy of the *Cow Boy*," (February, 23, 1884, 4) and noted later that tourists passing through Medora by train would pick up the newspaper. Sometimes Packard's helpers would actually board the train and sell issues to passengers.[28] A published letter "written to a friend of ours in Medora" (probably Morés or one of his staff) from Paris, France, said, "the *Bad Lands Cow Boy* is a favorite of mine. Be sure and send it to me regularly." (April 3, 1884, 4). A reach to Paris is not as far-fetched as it may sound, given Morés' political connections there, and repeated interest of French newspapers in Morés' flamboyant schemes. By late summer, Packard reported a circulation of 520, and added, "there is scarcely a copy sold that does not do double duty here before it is send to eastern friends" (August 7, 1884, 4).

We have no proof that the *Cow Boy* was widely circulated in the east. In general, however, frontier papers did indeed end up in front of eastern readers.[29] We do have strong evidence of the *Cow Boy's* eastern circulation:

- A circulation of more than 500 in a county of only 737, 60 percent men, many of them unlikely to be newspaper readers in this transient frontier boom town.
- Articles which would seem peculiarly unsuited to locals, most of whom were closely associated with the cattle industry. For instance, in editions of August 6 and 13, 1885, was published a remarkable "Cow Boy Dictionary," beginning with "Aparejos" and ending with "Wrangler." This would hardly have been useful to local residents in a cattle community.

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[28] Hagedorn, 329.

[29] Paul C. Schmidt, "The Press in North Dakota." *North Dakota History* 31 (October 1964), 219; George S. Hage, *Newspapers in the Minnesota Frontier 1849-1860*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1967, viii; Oliver Knight, "The Frontier Newspaper as a Catalyst in Social Change." *Pacific Northwest Quarterly*, April 1967, 75.

- The heavy passage of tourists who likely carried with them a paper with a unique name as a souvenir of passage through the Old West. In several issues Packard observed the amount of tourists passing through Medora, on the major rail line between Chicago and Seattle. "Almost every train from the east leaves one or more tourists at Medora," Packard wrote. (June 25, 1885, 4.)

- At least one of the specimens from the archives is addressed to "Baron Von Hoffman, 55 Wall Street, New York." Hoffman was Morés' father-in-law; Morés' family contributed its Medora collection to North Dakota archives in the 1940s.[30]

- The fame of Roosevelt and Morés in the east would likely have attracted readers to the newspaper published in "their" cattle town, a place become famous to eastern readers, regularly featured on the front pages of New York newspapers such as the *Sun*.[31]

Packard was probably accurate in his declarations that his *Cow Boy* was attracting the attention of the "dudes."

Packard's office, regular meeting place for Morés and Roosevelt, as both liked to avoid the saloons, was, according to a later interview, under a gnarled cottonwood tree, a one-room frame building which served as Packard's living room, bedroom, bath, printing office and editorial room.[32] Packard, Morés and Roosevelt, educated men from cultured backgrounds, were different from most frontier settlers, and knew each other well. Several times Packard wrote of enjoying an office visit from Roosevelt or Morés, and he was a frequent visitor to Morés chateau.[33]

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[30] Arnold O. Goplen, "The Career of Marquis de Morés in the Badlands of North Dakota." *North Dakota History* 13 (January-October 1946), 6.

[31] Hagedorn, 77.

[32] Hagedorn, 90. The author based this book on oral histories of people who know Roosevelt in Medora, and its preface is dated 1921. Some of the actual dialogues based on Medora events were obviously reconstructed more than 30 years later, and are perhaps unreliable, but description seems based on fact.

[33] Hagedorn, 112; Roosevelt, 96. Roosevelt called Packard "a good fellow, a college graduate and a first-class base-ball player." Packard betrayed his continuing interest in sports by regularly publishing sports news on his front page.

Physically, Packard's paper was not unusual for the time: four pages, advertising on all pages, few engravings, locally-written news on pages one and four, and "ready-print" on inside pages, covering regional and national events. Packard's advertising ratio was healthy, an average of 43 percent, but apparently it wasn't enough to make the "almighty dollars" Packard sought. Like most frontier editors, Packard also did job printing. Also, from advertisements in the *Cow Boy*, the energetic editor sold Studebaker wagons, insurance, barbed wire, other subscriptions, cattle, cedar fencing and real estate. He also was a notary public, a partner in a coal mine, and general manager of Morés' ill-fated Medora-Deadwood stage line. He also was officer in the Bad Lands Live Stock Association and Medora Gun Club, a territorial representative to Republican conventions, chairman of the "bucket brigade" and chairman of a "citizens' meeting" to organize a fire department, city sanitation effort, school, and committee on public order. He ran, unsuccessfully, for Justice of the Peace. While Roosevelt and Morés were most famous, Packard did most for Medora.[34]

It has also been reported that Packard was elected sheriff,[35] but the *Cow Boy* does not mention this, and the December 23, 1886, issue referred to a "Sheriff Willard."

Packard's Mission

Packard explicitly declared his mission (besides covering the cattle business, and making money) to be rehabilitation of the cowboy image, implicitly aiming his campaign back east. He relied on negative reports from the eastern press as a foil for his attempts to improve the cowboy image. For example, he called one such report in the Minneapolis *Evening Journal* "from beginning to end a lie...."

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[34] Mattison, 113.
[35] Hagedorn, 75.

> If a man knows anything of a class called cow boys he cannot help but know that as a class they are honest, industrious and fearless; their life is one of hardship and adventure and calculated to remove the polish of civilization from their manners, but they are generous, hospital [sic] and extravagant to a fault, and abhor a dishonorable action and despise and hunt down stock thieves with vigor (June 10, 1884, 1).

In a second page one story from the same issue, Packard declared that the cowboy is "a perfect type of physical manhood...finest horseman in the world...a dead shot....His life in the saddle makes him worship his horse, and with rifle and six-shooter, complete his happiness...."

Many more articles, and not a few poems, wore borrowed from a wide variety of livestock journals, magazines and newspapers to extol the cowboy's virtues:

> Who is it has no fixed abode
> Who seeks adventures by the load—
> An errant knight without a code?
> —The Cowboy....

(Credit to New Mexico *Stockgrower*, quoted in the *Cow Boy*, December 18, 1884, 1).

Three interviews in defense of cowboys which Roosevelt gave to eastern newspapers were excerpted, such as this credited to the New York *Mail:* "Cow boys are a very much maligned order of human beings. I have always found them a very hospitable, generous sort of men with a certain rude chivalry about them." (*Cow Boy*, June 22, 1885.)

Numerous jokes were borrowed to show the positive side of cowboys: under the headline "Cow-boys cure for snoring," a cowboy is described as entering a train car where a snoring man was annoying passengers. "The cow boy stepped up, said, 'Say, stranger, stop that 'ar snort or you'll get fired.' The cow boy was not large but he was full of guns and there was business in his eye. The big man said nothing but lay still, and his sleep, if he slept, was quiet as the slumber of infancy." (*Cow Boy*, October 30, 1884, 1.)

To examine the entire edition of the *Cow Boy* for evidence that Packard kept his promise of his original mission, all articles pertaining to cowboys were counted. In nearly three years, 69 articles were published addressing the cowboy theme. Of these, the largest percentage, 33 percent, addressed the positive character and morality of cowboys—tough, law-abiding, virtuous, courageous, noble, heroes. The second largest number of articles, 19 percent, addressed the issue of "bad" cowboys, but all of these articles portrayed them in a negative way, declared cowboy lawlessness to be the work of "tenderfeet," or drunks, "very rare" among "true" cowboys. "Four fifths of the reckless shooting done in the west is the work of some sap-headed tender-foot who wants to pose as a bad man," wrote Packard. (*Cow Boy*, March 26, 1885, 1.) Packard argued repeatedly that cowboys must not take "six-shooters" into town, because "every shooting affray we know of has been caused by whiskey, coupled with the senseless custom of 'packing a gun.'" (*Cow Boy*, July 30, 1885, 4.) Later Packard continued that in town to carry a "six-shooter" as protection "is terribly useless. In the first place, if he conducts himself as he should, there is far less danger of getting into trouble in the west than there is in the east," and if he tries to outdraw someone, "he will be filled so full of lead that some tenderfoot will locate him for a mineral claim." Packard spoke so often against cowboys bringing guns into Medora that it clearly must have been a problem. Roosevelt recalled when "we" organized law enforcement in Medora, "an excessively unattractive little hamlet," no shooting was allowed in the streets.[36] By the end of 1885 Packard was proudly claiming, "Whether it is owing to the effects of the *Cow Boy* or not in this direction, the fact is certain that not one-quarter of the revolvers are now carried here, that were two years ago." Nevertheless, the editor had to admit that a cowboy had recently shot a merchant in a saloon, and through he was drunk, the cowboy was still guilty of murder. This viewpoint was unusual in an era where drunks usually were not thought responsible for their actions.

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[36] Roosevelt, 90.

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Other themes addressed by cowboy articles included kindly ridicule of cowboys, usually the newcomers, (10 percent) great life of cowboys in the beauty of the west (8 percent), romance of the roundup (4 percent), freedom of the cowboy (3 percent) cowboys and Indians (6 percent) "dudes" trying to be cowbows ridiculed (10 percent), miscellaneous (cowgirls, lassos, mournful cowboys, definitions, 6 percent; all percentages rounded to nearest whole).

Articles on the cowboy theme were published throughout the *Cow Boy's* run, although as time went on fewer were locally written. No article negatively portraying cowboys was published, unless accompanied by comments indicating the "bad cowboy" was a rare exception. This shows that Packard's *Cow Boy* was to the editor's stated mission thrughout its existence.

Words and phrases Packard used to portray cowboys were strikingly similar to those later used in re-making the cowboy as myth: "honest... generous... fearless... hardship... adventure... perfect type of physical manhood... abhors a dishonorable action... finest horseman...worships his horse.... (Packard, *Cow Boy*, June 10, 1884, 1.)

"Keep his word...intensely loyal...simple and generous... brave... adventurous... strong... amiable as a child... knights on horseback... noble... amiable... hero...[37]

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[37] Joe B. Franz, "Cowboy Philosophy. A Cold Spoor." In John Francis McDermott, ed., ***The Frontier Reexamined***. (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1967) 170; Athearn, 25; Weston, 231; Roosevelt, 10, 100; Walker, 99; Savage, 111.

Packard's career as *Cow Boy* editor ended abruptly in early 1887. On January 15 a short note on page four of the nearby Dickinson *Press* read, "The *Cow Boy* office at Medora burned out Wednesday night. We understand but little material was saved and Bro. Packard's loss is considerable." Packard left Medora, perhaps at the right time: the disastrous winter left an incredible 75 percent of the area's cattle dead, and ruined most cattlemen. Roosevelt returned in April 1887 to write, "the losses are crippling," and he returned after only for occasional hunting expeditions.[38] Morés returned to France, and by 1889 Medora was "practically a deserted village."[39] Today it has become a tourist attraction. Packard's association with Roosevelt continued; he supported Roosevelt's candidacy for president in 1912. Packard died in Chicago in 1931 at 70.[40] By that time the cowboy of the Old West had long been transformed from man to myth.

Conclusion

Frontier cattle town newspapers played a major role in creating the cowboy myth in America, several years before the themes were assumed by myth-makers such as Cody and Roosevelt. The *Bad Lands Cow Boy* was closely associated with two internationally-famous celebrities who clearly played a major role in establishing the myth, especially Roosevelt. Moreover, evidence seems strong that the *Cow Boy* was widely read by people in large eastern cities. The newspaper's sustained pro-cowboy campaign, using words strikingly similar to those we now ascribe to the cowboy myth, certainly indicates an early influence, perhaps a substantial one.

Of course, it is important not to overplay influence of the *Cow Boy* in isolation. Many of its pro-cowboy articles were gleaned from other magazines and newspapers, especially other western cattle papers. These, too, likely reached eastern readers. As well, Cody's Wild West shows already were romanticizing the west: Cody defined the term in 1879, explaining that a cowboy was "a most expert rider." [41] Packard rather self-consciously chose the cowboy name and his mission, showing a little Cody-style promotional spirit. Continued investigation of other cattle papers and livestock journals would also probably show that Packard's ideas were not unique. What does seem true is that the cultural re-casting of cowboys from notorious to noble began before Buck Taylor, credited to frontier journalists themselves.

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[38] Elwyn Robinson, *History of North Dakota*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1966; republished by NDSU Institute for Regional Studies, 1995) 190.
[39] Mattison, 120.

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[40] Mattison, 116.
[41] Russell, 261.